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Tuesday



Family members survey the scene after the fire.

Deadly Blaze: Fire kills four in a Southeast rowhouse, including two children | **10**

Viktor vs. Viktor: Ukraine's presidential hopefuls debate | **7**



It's Ramsey: Gibbs says lead QB will retain the top spot next season | **11**

ENTERTAINMENT

Red Light Go: *Ludacris* has a youth foundation even Bill O'Reilly couldn't argue with. Also, 'Grand Theft' tracks; 'Shaun of the Dead' on DVD.

>> **17-20**

Weather > Partly Sunny



40 | 34

FULL FORECAST ON PAGE 25

Bush: Iraqi Troops Not Ready

President says some units unprepared to provide security

WASHINGTON | In a sobering assessment of the Iraq war, President Bush acknowledged Monday that Americans' resolve has been shaken by grisly scenes of death and destruction and he pointedly criticized the performance of U.S.-trained Iraqi troops. "No question about it," he said. "The bombers are having an effect."

Bush spoke a day after the deadliest attacks in Iraq since July — killing at least 54 people

in Najaf and at least 13 in Karbala — and six weeks before Iraqis vote for a transitional assembly that will choose a president and draft a permanent constitution.

Bush's strategy calls for American troops to protect Iraq while local police and soldiers are trained to do the job themselves, eventually allowing the United States to withdraw.

"Now I would call the results mixed in terms of standing up Iraqi units who are



Bush

willing to fight," Bush said in a candid assessment. "There have been some cases where, when the heat got on, they left the battlefield. That's unacceptable. Iraq will never secure itself if they have troops that, when the heat gets on, they leave the battlefield." What is needed, he said, is a better Iraqi military command structure. **TERENCE HUNT (AP)**

ARCTIC BLAST | COLD COMFORT



BUNDLED UP: Brent Bolea, left, and Hilary Kelip share a scarf Monday in Dupont Circle to protect themselves from the frigid temperatures. ❖ **Cold snap:** Winter weather sweeps East Coast | **Page 4**

City Officials Reopen Talks On Stadium

WASHINGTON | With the deal to bring the Montreal Expos to Washington on the brink of collapse, Washington political leaders made progress Monday toward a deal that could lead the D.C. Council to reconsider legislation to fund a ballpark for the team.

Council Chairman Linda W. Cropp put the stadium financing bill on the agenda for Tuesday's meeting, the group's last scheduled session of the year.

The agreement between the Expos and Washington expires Dec. 31 unless a financing plan is put in place consistent with the September agreement between the team and Mayor Anthony A. Williams.

Cropp pushed through an amendment last week that called for half the stadium finance money to come from the private sector. The baseball commissioner called the change unacceptable.

Williams met with Cropp on Monday for the first time in a week and said they were making progress. Cropp has said she would not revisit the stadium financing plan in council chambers unless there was a way to save the city money. **BRETT ZONGKER (AP)**

PETS | Adopt-A-Vermin Officials at the San Francisco animal shelter are looking for people willing to give a home to an orphaned rat. Last week, a woman delivered nearly 180 rats to the shelter. She said she found the rats on her lawn that morning,



packed into dog carriers. No one knows where the rodents came from or why they were left there. A rescue group has offered to take 80 of the rats, but scores more need homes. Shelter officials said rats make great pets. **(AP) EyeOpeners | Page 2**

eyeOpeners

CHARITY

The Bell, It Tolls for Thee

An intoxicated Salvation Army bell ringer was arrested Thursday after getting into a fight with an employee at a Denver grocery store where he was collecting donations. David Duncan, 46, was arrested on 11 outstanding warrants after he tussled with the Safeway worker, police detective Teresa Garcia said. Salvation Army spokeswoman Becky O'Guin said Duncan was in his second season working as a bell ringer. He was fired, she said. (AP)

NOTES

The Paper Trail

Call it the case of the perfect clue. A man handed a note demanding money to a teller at a bank in Milwaukee on Thursday, took the money and fled. Left behind was the note — written on the back of a paper from the state probation and parole department, complete with the man's name on it, Deputy Police Chief Brian O'Keefe said Friday. The 60-year-old man, who was on parole for bank robbery, was soon in custody. (AP)

LAWSUITS

Innocent Until Proven Stinky

Authorities in Iasi, Romania, are facing a legal challenge from some of the country's top lawyers over courtrooms

that allegedly smell like stables. The lawyers' bar is demanding \$1.9 million from the state for what they claim are the "humiliating" conditions they work in, the Adevarul newspaper reported. Attorney Mariana Bazdara, representing 600 lawyers, said that she and her

FRUSTRATION

He Wrecks a Drive

A man in Adelaide, Australia, was questioned by police Sunday after smashing his car with a sledgehammer, the Australian Associated Press reported. A police spokesman said officers investigated after receiving reports of a man damaging a vehicle. When they arrived, they found a car with extensive damage, including a smashed windshield and dented doors and hood — but the grinning man told them it was his own vehicle. The man apparently was frustrated when the car wouldn't start. (EXPRESS)



M. SCOTT MOON/AP

COLLECTING

Of All the Luck

Ed Martin Sr. of Soldotna, Alaska, might need a bit of luck to accomplish a record-breaking feat, but he's got that covered. Martin said he has collected 76,000 four-leaf clovers over the past two years. Local officials are working with the Guinness Book of Records to verify the collection as the world's biggest. The Peninsula Clarion reported. (AP)

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BULL MARKET: The artist behind the 7,000-pound bronze bull poised near New York's Wall Street is selling the work to the highest bidder, the Wall Street Journal reported. The catch: the buyer can't move the bull and must donate it to the city.

Nation

In Brief

TRENTON, N.J.

Drug Makers Working on All-in-One AIDS Treatment

Two drug companies announced Monday they will collaborate on developing the first all-in-one, once-a-day pill to treat HIV infection — a long-sought goal that would make it much easier for patients to stick with their medication. Currently, the best AIDS treatment requires patients to take two to four pills a day. Bristol-Myers Squibb Co. and Gilead Sciences Inc. announced the formation of a joint venture to test and market a single pill. (AP)

WASHINGTON

Lung Cancer Risk in '91 Gulf War Vets Linked to Fires

Veterans of the 1991 Gulf War exposed to pollution from oil well fires, exhausts and other sources may face an increased risk of lung cancer, a government advisory group reported Monday. A committee of the Institute of Medicine concluded there isn't enough evidence to determine whether most of veterans' health problems are associated with such exposures. (AP)

SCOTT DEPOT, W.VA.

Jackpot Winner's Missing Granddaughter Found Dead

The 17-year-old granddaughter of Jack Whittaker, winner of the nation's richest undivided lottery jackpot, was found dead Monday in the woods, more than two weeks after she disappeared. The cause of death was under investigation. (AP)

TEXAS | SEASON'S GREETINGS



SPREADING CHEER: Santa Claus, played by post office employee Juan Terrazas, greets Emilio Doring, center, and his brother Miguel Urbina as they carry packages into a Post Office in El Paso, Texas, on Monday.

Military Review Panel Frees 2nd Gitmo Detainee

WASHINGTON | A military review has determined a second prisoner held at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, is classified wrongly as an enemy combatant and will be released to his home country soon, the Navy's top civilian said Monday.

Pentagon officials also said they were looking into newly public allegations that interrogators at the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo

questioned detainees under the guise of being FBI agents.

The American Civil Liberties Union obtained and released e-mails that showed FBI officials disapproved of the practice and suggested the military interrogators were trying to take advantage of the rapport the FBI had established with some detainees.

Pentagon spokesman Bryan Whitman said such a technique was not on a list of interrogation methods approved by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. The Pentagon says all abuse allegations at Guantanamo are investigated. (AP)

Bush Stands by Defense Chief

President defends Rumsfeld as 'caring' amid ongoing criticism

WASHINGTON | Accused of being insensitive to U.S. soldiers in Iraq and their families, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld received a fresh endorsement Monday from President Bush, who called him "a caring fellow."

"I have heard the anguish in his voice and seen his eyes when we talk about the danger in Iraq and the fact that youngsters are over there in harm's way," Bush said at a White House news conference.

Congressional criticism of Rumsfeld has increased in recent weeks, with lawmakers of both parties accusing him of appearing indifferent to soldiers' pleas for more armored vehicles. Some have complained about his use of

a mechanical device to sign condolence letters to military families whose loved ones have died in battle. Rumsfeld said last week he will personally sign letters in the future.



Bush

Bush, who personally signs condolence letters, was asked why he was willing to overlook Rumsfeld's failure to do the same.

"I know Secretary Rumsfeld's heart," Bush said. "I know how much he cares for the troops," adding that Rumsfeld and his wife visit hospitalized soldiers "all the time to provide comfort and solace."

He said beneath Rumsfeld's "rough and gruff, no-nonsense demeanor is a good human being who cares deeply about the military and deeply about the grief that war causes." KEN GUGGENHEIM (AP)

New Polls Examine U.S. Views on Iraq

WASHINGTON | Despite growing doubts, most Americans still support keeping U.S. military troops in Iraq until the country is stabilized, according to polls released Monday.

Fifty-six percent say the United States should keep troops in Iraq until it is stable, according to a poll by the Pew Research Center.

Four in 10 said they approve of the way the United States has handled the situation in Iraq, while almost six in 10 disapprove, according to a CNN-USA Today-Gallup poll. (AP)

Poll positions: A new Post-ABC poll shows more than half want Rumsfeld fired | Today's Post, A Section



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Nation



FIR FRENZY: A shortage of Christmas trees in Hawaii has raised prices to more than \$200 each. Sellers had ordered smaller shipments this year after suffering losses last year, when hundreds of trees went unsold.

'Stolen' Infant Is Healthy

Baby taken from womb faring well; mother's alleged attacker in court

KANSAS CITY, MO. | A 4-day-old girl who was cut from her strangled mother's womb was in "remarkably good" condition Monday, a hospital spokeswoman said, and the alleged attacker faced an initial court appearance.

Authorities said Lisa Montgomery, 36, confessed to strangling Bobbie Jo Stinnett of Skidmore, Mo., on Thursday, cutting out the fetus and taking the baby back to Kansas, where she lives. She is accused of trying to pass the child off as her own to family and friends. Victoria Jo Stinnett, the baby girl, was later recovered unharmed.

Montgomery, 36, made a first appearance Monday before a packed courtroom in Kansas City, Kan., where her attorney refused to waive her right to preliminary and identity hearings. Both hearings have been scheduled for Thursday.

The child remained in the neonatal intensive care unit Monday at Stormont-Vail Regional Health Center in Topeka, Kan. (AP)



Montgomery



SNOW DAY: Charles Herman takes advantage of a rare December snow in New Bern, N.C., Monday. The two inches of snowfall closed schools and businesses.

East Coast Gets Blast Of Cold Winter Weather

Freezing temperatures hit northern Florida on Monday morning, readings dropped below zero across West Virginia and snow made some highways treacherous as the first big cold wave of the season swept southward.

Even North Carolina's Outer Banks got a rare seaside dusting of snow, and more than 2 feet fell near the Great Lakes.

The blast of Arctic air — one day before the official start of winter — drove temperatures in the Florida Panhandle down to 31 degrees at Crestview, 32 at Pensacola.

Thermometers registered below zero across West Virginia, including 2 below at the capital city of Charleston, the National Weather Service said.

Frigid temperatures and bitter winds in the Washington, D.C., region triggered the National Weather Service to issue a morning wind-chill advisory in the area.

Parts of New England had blowing snow, and more than 130 schools closed or had delayed openings in New Hampshire.

Icy pavement was blamed for two traffic deaths in New Jersey. (AP)



BY THE NUMBERS: A trade group for the major airlines expects 37.9 million travelers during the Christmas-to-New Year's holidays, nearly a 6 percent increase over last year. (AP)

Acupuncture Tied to Arthritis Relief

WASHINGTON | The ancient Chinese therapy of acupuncture can help ease pain and improve movement for people with arthritis of the knee, a new study concludes.

In the largest clinical study of acupuncture reported to date, researchers studied 570 patients age 50 and over with osteoarthritis of the knee. The multi-location study was led by Dr. Brian M. Berman of the University of Maryland School of Medicine in Baltimore.

Acupuncture involves insert-

ing thin needles into specific body points to stimulate health.

The participants were divided into three groups — 190 received acupuncture, 191 underwent sham acupuncture and 189 followed the Arthritis Foundation's self-help course for their condition.

Researchers said that by week eight patients receiving acupuncture began showing a significant increase in function and by week 14 a significant decrease in pain, compared with the other groups. (AP)

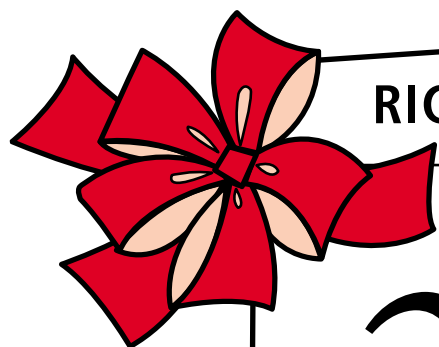
Today in The Washington Post

Pimp My Ride: Ford unveiled a new truck at the Washington Auto Show in an effort to make a play for a younger, urban audience interested in car customizing. | *Business*

Dying for Basic Care: A newly released analysis indicates that for African-Americans, poor access to good health care has cost some 900,000 lives. | *Health*

Painkiller Problems: The ongoing bad news about popular painkillers is expanding as officials raise concerns about naproxen, also sold as "Aleve." | *A Section*

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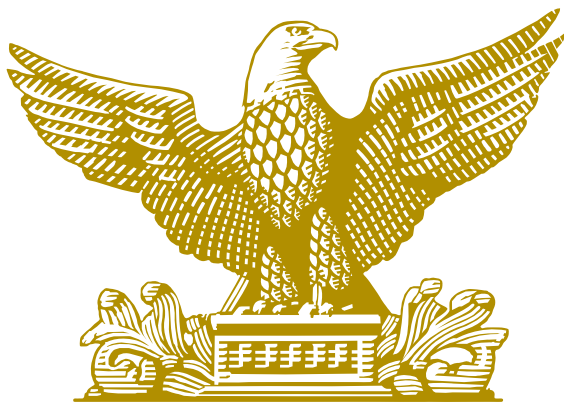
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World



HIGH TEA: St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City has recently opened a rooftop coffee bar, Reuters reported. The bar atop Christendom's largest church offers coffee and sodas but also a breathtaking view of St. Peter's Square and beyond.

Allawi Puts Focus on Sunni-Shiite Strife

Iraqi PM has long played down chances of sectarian civil war

BAGHDAD | Iraq's interim prime minister warned Monday that insurgents are trying to foment sectarian civil war as well as derail elections, while thousands of mourners turned out for funerals in the Shiite holy cities of Najaf and Karbala a day after car bombs killed 67 people.

Prime Minister Ayad Allawi said the mainly Sunni Muslim insurgents, blamed for Sunday's bloody attacks, want to "create ethnic and religious tensions ... to destroy the unity of this country."

"These attacks are designed to stop the political process," Allawi said, adding that his administration would not be deterred from holding Jan. 30 parliamentary elections — the first free vote since 1958.

Although members of his Cabinet have made similar warnings about the danger of a civil war, Allawi himself had regularly played down that possibility.



At left, a U.S. Marine runs for cover while another aims his rifle during fighting with insurgents in Ramadi on Monday. Above, an Iraqi girl recovers from wounds suffered in Sunday's car bomb attack in Najaf that killed dozens.

Shiite Muslims, who make up around 60 percent of Iraq's people, have been strong supporters of the electoral process, which they expect to reverse the longtime domination of Iraq's Sunni minority. The insurgency is believed to draw most of its support from Sunnis, who provided

much of Saddam Hussein's former Baath Party leadership.

Allawi said a big factor in the strength of the insurgency was the dismantling of Iraq's security forces after the U.S.-led invasion. "What is happening is that we are facing an enemy heavily supported even

in some cases with superior weapons," he said. "We will have setbacks, we are having setbacks, but we are determined to continue the fight."

Najaf police chief Ghalib al-Jazaari said 50 people had been arrested in connection with Sunday's bombings. DUSAN STOJANOVIC (AP)

In Brief

CHILE

Court Upholds Indictment, House Arrest of Pinochet

An appeals court on Monday upheld the indictment and house arrest of Gen. Augusto Pinochet on murder and kidnapping charges during his 1973-1990 regime, rejecting an appeal to stop the case because of the former dictator's health. The decision appeared to anticipate a new court battle for Pinochet, 89, who remained in intensive care at Santiago Army Hospital, recovering from a stroke he suffered Saturday. (AP)

BURUNDI

U.N. Peacekeepers Sexually Abused Girls, Probe Finds

A police investigation has concluded that two United Nations peacekeepers from Ethiopia sexually abused underage girls in Burundi. No charges were immediately filed, said the commander of the public security police. The two peacekeepers were arrested Dec. 11. The 5,476-member U.N. force is helping to monitor a peace deal between the government and Hutu rebels that ended Burundi's 11-year civil war. (AP)

MACAU

Hu Praises Progress Under '1 Country, 2 Systems' Policy

China's leader celebrated the fifth anniversary of Chinese rule over Macau on Monday, praising the former Portuguese colony for its success under China's "one country, two systems" policy that integrated the capitalist territory into the communist state. The remarks were seen as directed at leaders in both Hong Kong, another former colony under mainland rule, and Taiwan, which remains independent. (AP)

HUNGARY

Parliament OKs EU Charter

Hungary's parliament on Monday ratified the European Union's constitution, becoming the second EU country after Lithuania to approve the draft charter. The constitution is set to take effect Nov. 1, 2006, but it could be delayed if even one country does not approve it. At least nine countries — including France, Spain and Britain — are planning national referendums on the charter. (AP)

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U.S.-Based Group Adds Russia to 'Not Free' Roster

MOSCOW | Russia has restricted rights to such an extent that it has joined the countries that are not free for the first time since the 1991 fall of the Soviet Union, Freedom House said Monday, marking Moscow's march away from the democracies it embraces as diplomatic partners.

"This setback for freedom represented the year's most important political trend," the U.S.-based non-governmental organization wrote in its annual study.

It noted increased Kremlin control over the media, limitations on local governments, and parliamentary and presidential elections the group said were neither free nor fair.

The Russian Foreign Ministry had no immediate comment on the report. JUDITH INGRAM (AP)

RAT TRAP: A poison designed to thin out rat populations by making males sterile has been patented recently in China, the state-run Xinhua news agency reported. The poison is "fragrant" to rats and not harmful to humans, it said.



World



Yushchenko

Yanukovich

Ukrainian Rivals Spar In Debate

Candidate's poisoning never mentioned in televised face-off

KIEV, UKRAINE | Ukraine's rivals for the presidency traded accusations in a heated televised debate Monday, as opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko charged his rival with stealing the November runoff election and Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich urged the formation of a unity government.

With six days left before the Dec. 26 rematch, the candidates engaged in several sharp exchanges, but shook hands and smiled as the event ended. The campaign has been marked by tension after massive protests and revelations that Yushchenko was poisoned by dioxin, which wasn't mentioned in the debate.

The Kremlin-backed prime minister tried to appear more conciliatory, several times proposing a unity government. He pledged he would not contest official results and urged Yushchenko to do the same.

Yushchenko ignored the proposals, turning instead to fraud in the Nov. 21 vote that was later annulled by the Supreme Court. "You're a religious person, right? Thou shalt not steal. ... And then you stole 3 million votes," he said. (AP)

Gaza Plan Sparks Calls for Uprising

Jewish settlers say they'll openly resist pullout

JERUSALEM | The leaders of Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip and West Bank urged their followers Monday to resist a government plan to withdraw from parts of the occupied territories, edging closer to open revolt against Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's plan to pull out next year.

While the leaders said they remained opposed to violence, their call for civil disobedience — even at the risk of going to jail — marked the first time they have advocated breaking the law.

Since Sharon announced his withdrawal plan early this year, the settler movement has tried to

defeat it through political lobbying and an aggressive ad campaign.

Last summer, their political allies quit Sharon's ruling coalition in an attempt to undermine him, leaving the prime minister with a minority government. But Sharon has managed to outmaneuver them, turning to the moderate opposition for support as his hard-line coalition crumbled.

That strategy appeared headed for success Monday, when parliament endorsed a reform bill that is expected to clear the way for the moderate Labor Party to join the government. GAVIN RABINOWITZ (AP)

SOUTH AFRICA | BAH, HUMBUG



RITE OF PASSAGE: Two squirming brothers cry as they sit for a photograph with Santa Claus at Carlton Center in Johannesburg on Monday.

Indian Exec's Arrest 'Outrages' eBay

NEW DELHI | Parent company e-Bay and Indian industry officials have expressed anger and concern over the jailing of the CEO of eBay's Indian subsidiary in connection with the online sale of a sex video. The U.S. State Department also has made inquiries about the case.

Avnish Bajaj, the CEO of Baazee.com, India's most popular shopping portal, was arrested Friday in connection with the sale of images showing classmates at a New Delhi high school engaged in oral sex.

eBay said it was "outraged" by the police action, saying the sale

took place without the knowledge of Baazee.com officials and violated the company's policies. Baazee.com removed the item as soon as it became aware of it, eBay said.

Bajaj was in court on Saturday, where the judge refused bail and sent him to jail for a week. A U.S. consular official attended the hearing, the U.S. Embassy said. (AP)

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Money

4

The number of grams of fat in Hardee's new Charbroiled BBQ Chicken Sandwich, in contrast to the chain's month-old Monster Thickburger, which has 1,420 calories and 107 grams of fat. One Hardee's executive called it "the yin to the Monster Thickburger's yang."

Pfizer Pulls Celebrex Ads on Concerns

NEW YORK | Pfizer Inc. says it will immediately pull advertising for its top-selling arthritis pain reliever Celebrex, whose safety was called into question last week after a study found an increased risk of heart attacks in patients taking

high dosages of the drug.

Spokesman Andy McCormick said the company was suspending Celebrex ads in newspapers, radio, TV and magazines. Pfizer plans to keep Celebrex on the market, he said.

The FDA said Friday it was considering warning labels for Celebrex or withdrawing the drug from the market. Celebrex is in the same class of drug as Vioxx, a rival pain reliever that Merck & Co. pulled from the market earlier this year after a study found the drug doubled the risk of heart attack or stroke. (AP)

Market Action

New York Stock Exchange

Gainers

STOCK	LAST	DAILY CHANGE	DAILY PERCENT CHANGE
Kramont	23.55	+3.47	+17.3
FrankCov	2.35	+.25	+11.9
CmclMtl	47.42	+4.32	+10.0
StarGas	7.53	+.54	+7.7
Schawk	18.51	+1.30	+7.6

Losers

Hyprcm	5.39	-.63	-10.5
Ryder	48.97	-5.53	-10.1
Cott Cp	24.41	-2.69	-9.9
LVSands n	48.60	-4.40	-8.3
MStewrt	25.70	-1.90	-6.9

NASDAQ Stock Market

Gainers

STOCK	LAST	DAILY CHANGE	DAILY PERCENT CHANGE
Mikron	7.14	+2.64	+58.7
SupConsl	8.41	+1.96	+30.4
WorldGate	3.46	+.76	+28.1
Cardiom gn	7.43	+1.38	+22.8
Everlast	8.44	+1.40	+19.9

Losers

StdMic	18.35	-4.03	-18.0
EnPointe	2.79	-.54	-16.2
OmniEnr	2.15	-.40	-15.7
StarScien	5.19	-.86	-14.2
Verilink	2.50	-.41	-14.1

Rates

	CURRENT	PREVIOUS WEEK
Prime Rate	5.25	5.00
Fed Funds close	2.25	2.1875
3-month	2.16	2.19
2-year	3.03	2.96
10-year	4.19	4.15
30-year	4.81	4.81

Currency (Dollars in foreign currency)

	TODAY	PREVIOUS DAY	YEAR AGO
British Pound	.5137	.5159	.5659
Canadian Dollar	1.2289	1.2271	1.3379
European Euro	.7463	.7526	.8074
Japanese Yen	104.04	104.31	107.78
Mexican Peso	11.1540	11.2145	11.2290
Taiwanese Dollar	32.41	32.36	34.05

DOW	NASDAQ	S&P 500
+11.68	-7.35	+0.45
+0.11	-0.34	+0.04
10661.60	2127.85	1194.65

Biotech Stocks

STOCK	LAST	DAILY CHANGE	YEAR TO DATE PERCENT CHANGE
Amgen	62.95	-.15	+1.9
ApplBio	20.72	-.34	...
BiogenIdc	65.84	+1.04	+79.4
Celgene s	26.22	-.79	+16.8
Chiron	31.51	-.23	-44.7
Genentch s	51.46	+.10	+10.0
Genzyme	56.64	+.45	+14.9
GileadSci s	35.01	+.16	+20.1
Imclone	44.24	-1.36	+11.5
LabCp	49.13	-.26	+33.0
MedImun	27.05	-.30	+6.6
MillPhar	11.02	-.33	-40.9
Monsnto	52.49	+1.05	+82.4
OSI Phrm	69.41	+1.03	+115.2
QstDiag	94.10	-.03	+28.7

All Hopes Pinned On Late Shoppers

Expect more bargains, analysts say, after slow holiday sales so far

NEW YORK | Retailers are expected to increase discounting in the final days before Christmas since a late-buying binge failed to materialize the last weekend before the holiday.

"You will really see some dramatic desperation discounting" this week, said Burt Flickinger III, managing partner at Strategic Resource Group, an industry consultant.

Such potential discounting is fueling worries that profits could be hurt in the fourth quarter. Flickinger estimated that profit margins will be cut by 3 percent to 5 percent in the fourth quarter as a result.

Merchants needed a hefty sales surge this past weekend to recoup lost business after seeing a slow start to a holiday selling season. But ShopperTrak, which tracks sales at 30,000 retail outlets, reported Monday that total sales fell 3.3 percent for Saturday and Sunday,

compared with last year.

Now, retailers will have to rely even more heavily on procrastinators during the final days before Christmas, as well as post-holiday sales. Merchants also hope their bottom lines will be boosted by the redemption of gift cards, which are only recorded as sales when they are redeemed.

Luxury stores had the best performance over the weekend, despite offering only selected discounts. But mid-priced merchants — appealing to customers more vulnerable to higher heating costs and a volatile job market — are being forced to pull in customers with big discounts and expanded hours.

J.C. Penney Co., for example, will be opening at 7 a.m. from Wednesday through Friday, offering deals on jewelry and coats. Sears Roebuck and Co. is offering discounts of between 40 to 60 percent on jewelry and 25 percent to 30 percent off watches from Monday through Friday, according to Bill Masterson, a company spokesman. (AP)

Solo Living a Stretch for Minimum-Wage Earners

WASHINGTON | In only four of the nation's 3,066 counties can someone working full-time and earning federal minimum wage afford to pay rent and utilities on a one-bedroom apartment, an advocacy group on low-income housing reported Monday.

A two-bedroom rental is even more of a burden — the typical worker must earn at least \$15.37 an hour to pay rent and utilities, the National Low Income Housing Coalition said. That's nearly three times the federal minimum wage of \$5.15 an hour.

A one-bedroom apartment was considered affordable for minimum-wage workers in Crawford, Lawrence and Wayne counties in Illinois, where the housing wage was under \$6.29

an hour. Washington County, Fla. was the fourth, with a housing wage was listed at \$6.06 an hour.

Least affordable was the San Francisco metropolitan area; rent and utilities for a one-bedroom apartment in Marin, San Francisco or San Mateo counties required a wage of at least \$22.63 an hour.

California topped all states in the hourly wage needed to afford a two-bedroom apartment, at \$21.24, followed by Massachusetts, New Jersey, Maryland and New York.

GENARO C. ARMAS (AP)



BY THE NUMBERS: The hourly wage needed to afford rent and utilities of a typical two-bedroom apartment in Washington, D.C., is \$22.83, according to the study. (AP)

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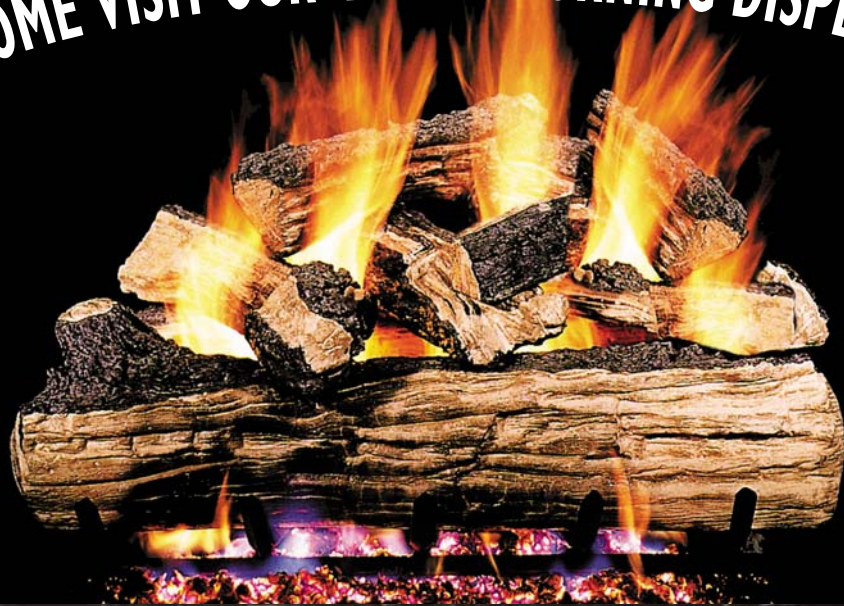
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Local

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The record number of area residents expected to travel 50 miles or more during the upcoming holidays — a 3.1 percent increase over last year, AAA Mid-Atlantic said Monday. Nearly 888,000 of them will travel by automobile.

Four Die in Morning Blaze

5-year-old among those killed in Southeast D.C.

WASHINGTON | A deadly fire in a Southeast row house early Monday morning has killed four family members. Three neighbors have been displaced from their home.

A 32-year-old woman, an eleven-year-old girl and a five-year-old girl were found dead inside the home. A 68-year-old man died after jumping from the second story window to escape the flames.

The aunt of the youngest child said relatives had been “praying

and hoping that she was in there hiding.”

District of Columbia Fire and Emergency Medical Services spokesman Alan Etter said an eight-year-old boy was able to escape.

Etter said a 57-year-old man believed to have also been inside the home was later found unharmed. Neighbors said the man rented the family's basement.

Family members stood outside

on the chilliest day of the season comforting one another as the wind blew down the police tape protecting the area.

Firefighters received the call just after 4:00 a.m. in the 400 block of 17th St. SE. The fire is under investigation. Etter said they believe it started in the basement.

Etter said when firefighters arrived the fire had caused the first floor to partially collapse. Firefighters had to stabilize the structure before they were able to go in. HEATHER GREENFIELD (AP)



Firefighters examine the damage following a deadly fire in Southeast Washington, D.C., on Monday. Four family members were killed in the early-morning blaze.

Man Struck by Metro Train Dies

WASHINGTON | A man was struck and killed Monday afternoon by an Orange Line train as it entered the Metro Center station.

The investigation was continuing Monday evening, but preliminarily “it appears that he walked off the platform and placed himself in the path of the train,” said Metro

spokesman Steven Taubenkibel.

The incident occurred just after 2 p.m. and halted Orange and Blue line service between the Federal Triangle and Farragut West stops until about 5:10 p.m., Metro said.

Police had yet to identify the man, but a Metro spokeswoman said he was white and approximately 30 years old. The man was at least the second person to be killed on Metro tracks this year, she said.

DANNY FREEDMAN (EXPRESS)

Police Arrest 5th Suspect in Arson

GREENBELT, MD. | A fifth person was arrested Monday on arson charges as the number of suspects accused of setting dozens of fires at an upscale suburban Washington housing development continued to grow.

Authorities also said they had interviewed or planned to question around 10 additional people who may be connected to the fires

two weeks ago in Indian Head, Maryland's largest case of residential arson.

The additional suspect was arrested Monday afternoon at the Charles County Sheriff's Office in La Plata, according to a law enforcement source who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Three suspects arrested over the

weekend made initial appearances Monday before a federal magistrate in Greenbelt. Magistrate Charles B. Day ordered Michael M. Everhart, 20, of Waldorf; Jeremy D. Parady, 20, of Accokeek; and Patrick S. Walsh, 20, of Fort Washington, held until a detention hearing Thursday. A fourth suspect, Aaron L. Speed, 21, was arrested last week. (AP)

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Ehrlich Malpractice Plan Is a Mystery

ANNAPOLIS, MD. | Three days after Gov. Robert Ehrlich announced he had reached an agreement with top legislative leaders to call a special session of the legislature to work on medical malpractice insurance reform, details of the agreement remained largely a mystery Monday.

Dennis O'Brien, public relations chairman for the Maryland Trial Lawyers Association, said he had gotten no information on the gov-

ernor's plan except a list of items that contained few details on what might be included in the bill.

Dr. Karl P. Riggie, a Hagerstown surgeon who heads a statewide physicians' group pushing for insurance reform, said it appeared from what he knew that the governor's bill “at this point is probably not sufficient” to reduce the cost of malpractice settlements and help hold the line on future premium increases. (AP)

The Lotteries

Monday, Dec. 20

DISTRICT

Mid-day Lucky Numbers	0-4-2
Evening Lucky Numbers	4-3-6
Mid-day DC 4	6-5-8-1
Evening DC 4	0-4-1-2
Quick Cash	17-29-35-7-27-13
Hot Five	29-23-22-2-20

MARYLAND

Mid-day Pick 3	7-3-7
Evening Pick 3	2-2-5
Mid-day Pick 4	5-8-6-7
Evening Pick 4	6-7-4-2
Match 5	6-22-27-34-39 Bonus: 30

VIRGINIA

Mid-day Pick 3	7-0-6
Mid-day Pick 4	5-0-4-3
Mid-day Cash 5	4-15-18-20-21

All winning numbers are official only when validated at a lottery ticket location or a lottery claims office. Drawings that occur after Express's deadline will be published two days later.

TURTLE POWER: The University of Maryland's basketball team managed to stay in the AP Top 25 on Monday, a day after the Terps squeaked past Florida State 90-88. Maryland was No. 24 in the poll, one spot ahead of the University of Virginia.



Sports



LIVE ONLINE

Chat House

Washington Post columnist **MICHAEL WILBON** was online Monday to discuss the Redskins and D.C. baseball.

If the Redskins win their last two games, they will have the tie-breaker over any other 7-9 NFC team. If they beat Dallas, they can't even be eliminated before the last week of the season. Are you confident that either New Orleans, St. Louis, or Tampa Bay will win each of their last two games?

I'm confident the Redskins won't make the playoffs. How's that? I can't even believe you've looked up the tie-breakers. I'm not sure the Redskins can beat the Cowboys Sunday.

Hindsight is always 20-20, but given Marty Schottenheimer's excellent record in San Diego, were we too hard on him here? And would the Redskins have been better off now had he stayed?

I wrote then that I would have kept Marty as coach and fired him as GM, but he didn't want to give up GM duties (which I wouldn't have given him in the first place). But he wouldn't give up the GM duties, so he had to go. But he's coach of the year, no question in my mind.

Don't you believe that many D.C. residents have trouble understanding why a 100 percent publicly financed stadium is being rammed down their throats by MLB? And don't you think that Linda Cropp is serving the city and her constituents by refusing to be bulldozed?

I don't have any problem with Linda Cropp's objections and her concerns. In fact, each and every one is logical and sound business. Now, for the 1,000th time: those objections should have been made before a deal was reached.

After all is said and done, do you believe D.C. will land baseball and a new stadium?

Today, I think D.C. will get the new stadium. But ask me tomorrow and I might feel totally different. I'm not going to try to guess what Linda Cropp will do next.

Gibbs Going With Ramsey in 2005

Redskins coach says Brunell will be the backup

REDBKINS | Patrick Ramsey has already won next season's quarterbacks competition for the Washington Redskins.

Coach Joe Gibbs said Monday that Ramsey will be his 2005 starter, and he expects Mark Brunell to remain with the team as a high-priced backup.

"We're starting with Patrick," Gibbs said. "That's who we're going with. He's our guy. We're hoping he continues to progress."

Ramsey has completed 65 percent of his passes, with five touchdowns and three interceptions and an 83.3 rating, in five starts since

replacing Brunell. The Redskins are 2-3 in those games, but the three losses came against Super Bowl contenders Philadelphia (twice) and Pittsburgh.

Gibbs praised Ramsey's adjustment to the coach's more conservative offense, which asks the quarterback to take fewer risks downfield. Ramsey often forced deep passes under previous coach Steve Spurrier, a habit that lingered into this season's training camp and resurfaced when he threw five interceptions in 55 attempts in two regular-season relief appearances.

The coach said he had a long talk

with Ramsey about the importance of cutting down on turnovers, and Ramsey appears to have learned the lesson.

"We've got a heck of a defense," Gibbs said. "And the quarterback on a team like that has to be careful with the football."

Gibbs said he expects all three of his quarterbacks — Ramsey, Brunell and Tim Hasselbeck — to return next season. The Redskins paid a high price for Brunell in the offseason, trading a third-round draft pick to Jacksonville for him and then signing him to a seven-year, \$43 million contract with an \$8.6 million signing bonus.

JOSEPH WHITE (AP)

PLAYOFFS? IT'S POSSIBLE

What needs to happen this weekend for the Redskins to gain control of their playoff destiny:

- The Redskins (5-9) must beat the Cowboys (5-9).
- The Buccaneers (5-9) must beat the Panthers (6-8).
- The Falcons (11-3) must top the Saints (6-8).
- The Eagles (13-1) have to beat the Rams (6-8).
- The Bengals (6-8) must beat the New York Giants (5-9).

What a mess: A breakdown of the various playoff scenarios in the lowly NFC | **Today's Post, Sports**



PAIN IN THE ANKLE: The Eagles' Terrell Owens may return for the NFC Championship game in the best-case scenario.

Eagles' Lose TO for Regular Season

Star receiver's sprained ankle may keep Philly from the Super Bowl

FOOTBALL | Eagles star receiver Terrell Owens will miss the rest of the regular season and possibly the playoffs and Super Bowl because of a sprained right ankle, a devastating blow to the best team in the NFC.

Owens will have surgery

Wednesday and stands only an outside shot at being able to play in the NFL's championship game on Feb. 6 — if Philadelphia makes it that far — head trainer Rick Burkholder said.

"I was looking forward to the playoffs, really trying to get this team to the Super Bowl," Owens said in a conference call. "I think without me, still, they [will] achieve that goal."

Owens, who has 77 catches for

1,120 yards and a team-record 14 touchdowns, also has a fracture a few inches below his knee. But Burkholder still didn't rule out the chance that Owens would be able to run in five weeks — the weekend of the NFC title game.

Owens was hurt on the second play of the third quarter of Philadelphia's win over Dallas on Sunday when he was dragged down from behind by Roy Williams on a 20-yard reception. **DAN GELSTON (AP)**

Reliever Stays With The Expos

D.C. BASEBALL | Left-handed pitcher Joey Eischen doesn't know what city he will play in next year, but he does know for what team. The reliever agreed on Monday to a one-year, \$1.04 million deal with the Expos, who may become the Washington Nationals if Major League Baseball and the D.C. Council can agree on a financing plan for a new stadium.

Eischen is the only one of seven Expos players eligible for arbitration expected to re-sign with the team by Monday's deadline.

Interim general manager Jim Bowden was deciding whether to tender offers to the other six: outfielder Brad Wilkerson, catcher Brian Schneider, first baseman Nick Johnson and pitchers Tony Armas Jr., Tomo Ohka and T.J. Tucker.

Due to the team's uncertainty, Bowden's pursuit of free agents and trades has virtually halted.

Eischen made only 21 appearances last season because of elbow injuries. He went 0-1 with a 3.93 ERA in 18 1/3 innings. **(AP)**

Sally Jenkins: Linda Cropp should be praised for changing the District's stadium deal | **Today's Post, Sports**

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Sports

Billick Praises Ravens' Defense

Baltimore in four-way tie for final playoff spot after loss to Indy

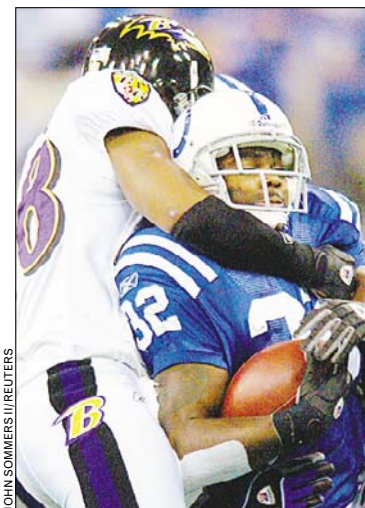
RAVENS | Baltimore Ravens head coach Brian Billick is used to praising his team's defensive efforts.

But if his 8-6 squad loses out on a four-team battle for the AFC's last playoff spot, stalwart performances like Sunday's 20-10 loss at Indianapolis won't matter.

"I thought our defense was magnificent in its ability to match up with an elite player in the league in Peyton Manning," Billick said on Monday.

Manning came up one touchdown pass short of tying Dan Marino's single-season record of 48 scoring tosses. However, two Kyle Boller interceptions and a blocked field goal helped send the Ravens to their third loss in four games.

Baltimore is tied with Jacksonville, Denver and Buffalo for the conference's sixth seed, but Jacksonville holds the tiebreaker edge due to head-to-head wins over the Bills and Broncos and a strength-of-schedule advantage over the Ravens. But the Ravens would likely leapfrog the Jaguars should the team beat Pittsburgh



The Ravens' Gary Baxter tackles the Colts' Edgerrin James on Sunday.

on Sunday due to the Steelers' 13-1 record.

"The objective was to get to 10-6," Billick said. "We've said all along, does that get you in? We'll find out."

Baltimore is the only team to defeat the Steelers, winning a 30-13 home decision in Week Two. Tommy Maddox started at quarterback for Pittsburgh that day, but after he was knocked out of the game, rookie sensation Ben Roethlisberger came in and has started and won every game since. (AP)

NFL Insider: Washington Post columnist Mark Maske will discuss the NFL playoff scenarios and the Washington Redskins at 1 p.m. | washingtonpost.com/liveonline

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC	W	L	PCT.	GB	LIO	CONF.
New York	13	11	.542	—	5-5	7-7
Boston	11	12	.478	1.5	6-4	6-7
Philadelphia	10	13	.435	2.5	4-6	9-6
Toronto	9	17	.346	5	2-8	4-10
New Jersey	7	16	.304	5.5	5-5	5-7

CENTRAL	W	L	PCT.	GB	LIO	CONF.
Cleveland	14	10	.583	—	5-5	9-7
Indiana	12	11	.522	1.5	2-8	10-5
Detroit	12	11	.522	1.5	6-4	6-6
Chicago	7	15	.318	6	5-5	3-6
Milwaukee	6	15	.286	6.5	2-8	5-8

SOUTHEAST	W	L	PCT.	GB	LIO	CONF.
Miami	19	7	.731	—	9-1	15-2
Washington	13	9	.591	4	6-4	10-6
Orlando	14	10	.583	4	5-5	6-5
Charlotte	6	14	.300	10	4-6	4-8
Atlanta	4	20	.167	14	2-8	2-11

WESTERN CONFERENCE

NORTHWEST	W	L	PCT.	GB	LIO	CONF.
Seattle	18	5	.783	—	7-3	11-3
Minnesota	15	8	.652	3	7-3	12-3
Denver	13	11	.542	5.5	5-5	4-6
Portland	12	11	.522	6	5-5	4-7
Utah	10	15	.400	9	2-8	7-7

PACIFIC	W	L	PCT.	GB	LIO	CONF.
Phoenix	21	3	.875	—	9-1	11-2
Sacramento	16	7	.696	4.5	8-2	8-7
L.A. Lakers	13	10	.565	7.5	6-4	8-7
L.A. Clippers	11	12	.478	9.5	4-6	4-9
Golden State	7	17	.292	14	4-6	2-15

SOUTHWEST	W	L	PCT.	GB	LIO	CONF.
San Antonio	20	5	.800	—	8-2	9-4
Dallas	16	9	.640	4	6-4	10-7
Houston	11	13	.458	8.5	5-5	8-7
Memphis	11	15	.423	9.5	6-4	6-9
New Orleans	2	21	.087	17	1-9	2-13

Standings through Dec. 19 games



STABLE PLAN: The Colts and the city of Indianapolis have agreed on a plan for a \$500 million stadium funded mostly through gambling revenue. The agreement must be approved by the General Assembly and the City-County Council.

Sports

In Brief

COLLEGE HOOPS

Majerus Apologizes to USC

Rick Majerus apologized Monday for backing out of the Southern California coaching job less than a week after accepting it, saying he realized his health wasn't up to working 18-hour days. Majerus, 56, decided he could not coach up to his standards because of what he called "my fitness problem." (AP)

FOOTBALL

Packers Receiver Remains Hospitalized After Big Hit

Green Bay Packers wide receiver Robert Ferguson will stay in the hospital at least one more night as he recovers from the clothes-line hit by Jacksonville safety Donovan Darius. Ferguson got a concussion and was temporarily paralyzed below the waist when he was hit Sunday. He regained feeling and movement on his way to the hospital, where he was kept overnight. (AP)



This hit by Donovan Darius left Robert Ferguson temporarily paralyzed.

BASEBALL

Orioles Add Kline, Gomez

The Baltimore Orioles signed free agent Steve Kline to a two-year contract, and acquired Chris Gomez from Philadelphia, the team announced Monday. Kline, 32, a left-handed relief pitcher, went 2-2 with a 1.79 ERA in the 2004 season in 67 games with St. Louis. Gomez, 33, an infielder, signed a minor-league deal with the Orioles on Dec. 8, then was selected by the Phillies in the Rule 5 Draft last week. He was acquired for cash considerations. (AP)

TODAY'S TV LINEUP

NBA (10 P.M. ON COMCAST) The Washington Wizards continue their tough West Coast trip with a game at the Sacramento Kings.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL (7:45 P.M. ON ESPN) Syracuse takes on Georgia Tech in the Champs Sports Bowl.

COLLEGE HOOPS (7 P.M. ON ESPN2) Bobby Knight leads Texas Tech against Iowa.

COLLEGE HOOPS (9 P.M. ON ESPN2) No. 21 Michigan State faces UCLA in a battle of traditional powers.

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✓ *Drink daily or almost daily?*

✓ *Are between the ages of 21 and 45?*

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All calls are confidential.



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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

For an Investigational Oral Vaccine Study

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YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IF YOU ARE:

- Between the ages of 18 and 45 • In good general health
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- Available for up to 15 outpatient visits (for up to 2-month) and a 6 month follow-up phone call

YOU WILL BE PROVIDED:

- A no-cost health screening • Compensation for your time and effort

WHERE: Walter Reed Army Institute of Research in Silver Spring, MD

CONTACT: 1-866-856-3259 Toll Free

301-319-9335/9320

www.ARMYClinicalTrials.com

Healthy Adult VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



HIV is a global epidemic. Currently, 42 million people worldwide are living with HIV/AIDS, a disease that has no cure. In 2003, 5 million people were newly infected with HIV, equaling about 14,000 infections each day. Approximately 11 of every 1000 adults aged 15 to 49 worldwide, are HIV infected.

The world is in desperate need of a vaccine for the prevention of HIV infection.

Will you help?

Walter Reed Army Institute of Research and the Henry Jackson Foundation for the Advancement of Military Medicine are currently enrolling volunteers to participate in a study to evaluate the safety of a new investigational HIV vaccine.

If you are a healthy US citizen between the ages of 18-45, are not currently in the US military and are available for 13 months, you may be qualified to participate in a study evaluating this vaccine.

This experimental vaccine does not cause HIV infection.

301-251-8351

Ask for Keisha, MJ, or Kathleen

Volunteers Needed

Beltsville Human Nutrition Research Center Beltsville, MD

IS RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE:

- 1) OVERWEIGHT 2) NONSMOKING
- 3) AGE 35 - 65 YEARS

FOR NUTRITION RESEARCH

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PARTICIPANTS WILL BE COMPENSATED

This is a study to evaluate the effects of protein and carbohydrate on body weight and body composition

FOR INFORMATION, CALL:



(301) 504-5454 or VISIT OUR WEB SITE

www.barc.usda.gov/bhnrc and click on 'volunteering info.'



Malaria Vaccine Research Study

PURPOSE: To study the safety and effectiveness of a new investigational Malaria Vaccine.

Volunteers Needed: Healthy Men and Women Aged 18-45 Years Without Previous History Of Malaria Or Receipt Of A Malaria Vaccine.

Health Screening And Financial Compensation Provided.

Where: Walter Reed Army Institute Of Research in Silver Spring, MD

CONTACT: 1-866-856-3259 toll free
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or www.wrairclinicaltrials.com

RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES FOR COCAINE USERS

If you currently use cocaine and are interested in participating in an inpatient drug research study sponsored by the National Institutes of Health, and are:

**Between 18-45
Years of Age**

**Call 1-866-750-2165
for more information**

And to schedule a confidential screening interview to see if you qualify.

Studies will be conducted in the
**Clinical Pharmacology Unit
of a federal medical research facility
in Bethesda, Maryland**

RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

If you currently have used prescription or non-prescription pain medication for non-medical use at least five times in the last year and are interested in participating in a 25 day inpatient drug research study and are:

- **A Healthy, Male or Female**
- **Between 18-50 Years Of Age**

**1-866-750-2165
For More Information**

And to schedule a confidential screening interview to see if you qualify. Studies will be conducted in the Clinical Pharmacology Unit of a federal medical research facility in Bethesda, Maryland.

Personal Technology. Tuesdays. 

PAIN RESEARCH

Do you suffer from ARTHRITIS, LOWER BACK PAIN, or pain related to DIABETES or SHINGLES SCARS? Do you suffer from rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis or low back pain? Do you suffer from diabetes which has caused you to get pain in your feet or other extremities? Have you suffered from shingles which has left you with painful scars? We are looking for people who suffer from these complaints to participate in an interview at our Bethesda office. The interview will take approximately 1 hour and participants will be reimbursed for their time. *For more info. please leave a message for 'The Pain Study' at 1-877-954-4252* **MEDTAP** International

EARLY CAREGIVER STUDY:

Need Adult Participants If you assisted a parent with feeding or other needs when you were under 21, then call Dr. Kim Shifren at 410-704-6239 to see if you qualify for this study.

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For more info call;
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Are you tired because your child wakes up during the night?

Do you have a 6-15 month old child in your household? Does your 6-15 month old child have a sleep problem? If so, you may qualify for participation in a sleep study being conducted at Johns Hopkins University testing an over the counter medicine. Please call toll free at 1-866-770-3847 for further information or visit www.hopkinsleepstudy.net

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The Washington Post

For Women Only Participate in a High Blood Pressure Research Study

If you are a woman between the ages of 45 and 75 and have high blood pressure you may be eligible to take part in this nationwide study.

If you qualify you may be compensated up to \$1,000 for your participation.

The purpose of this research study is to evaluate the effectiveness of hormone replacement therapy (HRT) on lowering high blood pressure in post-menopausal women.

Study participation includes:

- Medical attention and care by a certified physician
- A complete physical exam at no cost to you, including mammograms and ECG's
- Study medication is available at no cost to you
- 9-12 brief visits (30-60 minutes) at the clinical center

Please contact:

**Millennium Clinical
Research Center**

703-527-8100 or e-mail

bloodpressurestudy@yahoo.com

Millennium is located in Arlington, VA and is Metro accessible.



Health & Fitness



STIGMATIZED: Paulette Hogan said she draws strength from her family, including son Quincy, while her church and former friends have shunned her for having HIV.

Viral Reaction

Black women with HIV find they can't always get support

HIV | Paulette Hogan's church was her rock. But three years ago when Hogan, 41, discovered she was HIV-positive, her church friends stopped talking to her and she stopped going to church.

Black women represent just 7 percent of the U.S. population, but account for 69 percent of new HIV and AIDS cases among women.

Several factors help explain the disparity. Poverty increases the chance of contracting HIV, and an estimated one in four black women in the United States lives in poverty.

But health experts, patient advocates and community activists point to another factor: the social stigma of being a black woman with HIV. Within the black community, they say, intolerance, denial and silence persist. High-risk women don't get HIV tests or use condoms, and those who are HIV-positive keep quiet.

"These women are very much in hiding," said Sylvia Drew Ivie, executive director of T.H.E. Clinic in South Los Angeles.

According to the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, black women are 18 times more likely to get the disease than white women, and five times more likely than Hispanic women.

DANIEL COSTELLO (LOS ANGELES TIMES)

Low-Carb Cools Off

DIET | A year ago, Dave Champlin and his two roommates had a combined weight of 890 pounds and tried the Atkins diet. Champlin lost about 45 pounds and his roommates each lost between 50 and 60 pounds. All three are off the diet and gained back weight.

"It just got kind of tiresome," Champlin said. "Eating the same thing over and over."

Experts say the low-carb diet craze is over: A NPJ Group study found the percentage of American

adults on low-carb diets in 2004 peaked at 9.1 percent in February and dropped to 4.9 percent by November.

Only one of four was significantly cutting carbs and "virtually none" were correctly following the diets.

Companies that rode the low-carb wave are refocusing their strategies. American Italian Pasta said low-carb demand had peaked, and it is now marketing low-calorie foods. MARGARET STAFFORD (AP)

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BE LIKE HEF: We'll play it for the music: It's every teenage boy's fantasy — be robe-wrapped Hugh Hefner for a few hours while playing "Playboy: The Mansion," a video game coming out in January. Our proposed sequel title? "Playboy: The Hot Tub."



Entertainment

That's Crazy Talk

Flush with success, good-time rapper Ludacris gets serious

PERSONALITY | Christopher Bridges uses the rap moniker Ludacris, but there's nothing ludicrous about his career.

The Atlanta rapper's new release, "The Red Light District," is one of the holiday season's top sellers.

Earlier this year, Ludacris took part in the runaway success of Usher's "Yeah!" as a guest along with Lil Jon. The threesome is headed back to the top of the R&B and pop charts with "Lovers and Friends," a cut from Lil Jon & the East Side Boyz' new album, "Crunk Juice."

Looking ahead, Ludacris will be involved with acting in two movies in 2005, "Hustle & Flow" and "Crash"; music releases by new artists, including rock act Lazy Eye and R&B artist Bobby V; and ongoing projects for the Ludacris Foundation, a youth-targeted nonprofit.

"I'm just trying to keep it moving," the rapper said. "I just do what I do, always trying to bring a different element to my style."

That is apparent on "The Red Light District," which reveals a more



NOT SO FUNNY: Ludacris has a number-one album and his own youth foundation.

introspective side of the fun-loving rapper.

Ludacris drafted a number of high-profile rap colleagues for the album, plus a mix of established and new producers. The mix includes Timbaland, Nate Dogg, DJ Quik, DMX, Organized Noize and DJ Green Lantern.

Bobby V guests on "Pimpin' All Around the World," while "Not Me" showcases Small World and Dolla Boi.

Ludacris joins Nas and beatbox legend Doug E. Fresh on "Virgo"; the track also appears on Nas' just-released "Street's Disciple."

Ludacris also displays his fond-

ness for the "Austin Powers" film series on "Number One Spot." The song takes to task conservative commentator Bill O'Reilly of Fox's "The O'Reilly Factor." Two years ago, O'Reilly's comments led to Ludacris being dropped as a Pepsi spokesperson.

"You've got to reinvent yourself and keep people guessing," Ludacris said. "So there's more experimentation on this album. It's hard to explain, but I'm rapping and harmonizing at the same time; my voice is doing different things. And I get more personal on some of the songs."

One example is "Large Amounts," in which the rapper ponders financial success in the context of his relationships with the Internal Revenue Service, women and family members.

Beyond "Red Light," Ludacris has organized a toy drive on behalf of the Ludacris Foundation, which he established in 2002. The foundation works with hospitals, rehab centers, boys and girls clubs and housing developments. "It's geared toward helping kids help themselves," Ludacris said. "It's about giving back."

GAIL MITCHELL (BILLBOARD)

Music to Perpetrate By

'Grand Theft Auto' is the soundtrack to the perfect crime

MUSIC | The video-game business folks are leaving no stone unturned in their search for profits. They're selling game titles at a record pace ("Halo 2"), segueing into the motion-picture business ("Resident Evil") and now easing their way onto record racks with a really good boxed set titled "Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas" (Interscope).

These are the tunes that blare from the virtual car radio when you beat someone down and steal their ride in the GTA video game — when you're tired of "K-DST" station and its mishmash of classic rock, you can flip the dial to "Bounce FM," kind of a soul-music party mix, and continue pillaging.

Without the GTA branding, this would be a humdrum release. But it feels cooler when visions of late-night street-life mayhem from the video game are buzzing through your head.

The best disc is "Bounce FM,"



SOUNDS GOOD: The motorcycle may not have a radio, but "GTA" rocks.

thanks to Cameo's "Candy," Zapp's "I Can Make You Dance" and Rick James' "Cold Blooded."

The "Radio X" modern rock disc is full of good stuff too, much of it entirely appropriate to the car-theft-ring theme of GTA, such as Rage Against the Machine's "Killing in the Name" and "Been Caught Stealing" from Jane's Addiction.

The dud discs are "K-Jah," a mixed bag of also-ran reggae, and "CSR 103.9," a New Jack Swing disc with underachieving tracks.

There will certainly be more to come. When top artists can get into the ears of gamers, there's bound to be a CD sale in the making. RON HARRIS (AP)

Today's Top Stops

FOR COMPLETE EVENT LISTINGS SEE
WASHINGTONPOST.COM/ENTERTAINMENT

Troubled Waters: Mary Christmas

Baltimore's own freakshow auteur puts on a holiday-themed meet-and-greet. At "A John Waters Christmas," the filmmaker will take questions, discuss his Xmas fetish and, if you're naughty, maybe spin some oddities from his amazing new Christmas CD.

9:30 Club, 815 V St. NW; with Mary Frankster, 7:30 p.m., \$25-\$75; 703-218-6500. (U St.-Cardozo)



Baltimore's Santa Claus has oddities in his sack and weirdness on the sleigh.

Through the Glass Harpily: Jamey Turner

Glass-harp master Jamey Turner brings his nimble fingers, distilled water and the 60 stemmed drinking glasses that make up this "instrument" to the Millennium Stage for an evening of holiday tunes.

Kennedy Center, Millennium Stage, 2700 F St. NW; 6 p.m., free; 202-467-4600. (Foggy Bottom-GWU)

Return of the Queens: Princessed

Legendary D.C. punkettes Princessed reconvene for a reunion show; Del Cielo and Carol Bui come along to cheer them on.

Black Cat, 1811 14th St. NW; 9 p.m., \$5; 800-551-7328. (U St.-Cardozo)

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Please send press releases and photos to expressevents@readexpress.com

Entertainment



YEAH! Silver-toothed rapper Lil Jon headed up the Top Independent Albums chart—again. Lil Jon & the East Side Boyz, also known as the “Kings of Crunk,” who somehow qualify as indie, have two of the top five titles on the TIA chart. They dominated in 2003 as well.

An Executive Derision

NBC head Jeff Zucker goes before the lens

CAMEOS | Is that Jeff Zucker playing with his Game Boy while on the phone with one of Hollywood's top agents and then forgetting his name? Is that him cursing in the hallways of NBC, in utter disbelief as Kirstie Alley walks by? Is that Zucker, the president of NBC Universal Television Group, yelling

at her agent on the phone, “You are such a liar! She is so fat.”

Yes, yes and yes.

When Showtime launches “Fat Actress” in March, a “fictional reality” comedy starring Alley, viewers will see Zucker playing himself in the improvisational show's pilot episode.

In the show, Alley demands that her agent, Sam Rascal (a fictional version of William Morris' head of television, Sam Haskell), land her a meeting with a network executive to pitch her own show. Since Alley spent several years on the peacock network on “Cheers” and “Veronica's Closet,” Zucker was a natural fit.

“We've all been in those awk-



“Fat Actress” star Kirstie Alley gives a screen role to a peacock network exec.

ward network meetings, and people try to keep the conversation going and be nice to each other,” said Bob Greenblatt, president of programming at Showtime.

Haskell said he was ready to have the NBC executive sign “a rich-and-famous contract” so he can become his agent.

“Even I had to laugh out loud when he forgets who he is talking to when he's on the phone with the guy who plays me,” Haskell said. “Of course, that would never happen in real life.” MARIA ELENA FERNANDEZ (LOS ANGELES TIMES)

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SPANGLISH (PG13) ✓ 12:10, 1:00, 3:15, 4:00, 6:45, 7:15, 10:00, 10:20
OCEAN'S TWELVE (PG13) 11:35, 12:00, 12:45, 1:30, 2:00, 3:00, 3:45, 4:30, 5:00, 6:15, 7:00, 7:35, 8:15, 9:30, 9:55, 10:30
BLADE: TRINITY (R) 12:10, 12:40, 1:20, 3:05, 3:40, 4:15, 5:50, 6:35, 7:25, 8:40, 9:40, 10:10
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HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS (PG13) ✓ 1:10, 4:10, 7:10, 10:10
CHRISTMAS WITH THE KRANKS (PG) 11:50, 2:10, 4:40, 7:20, 9:50, 10:30
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ALEXANDER (R) 9:30 PM
CHRISTMAS WITH THE KRANKS (PG) 12:00, 2:20, 5:30, 7:45, 9:55
NATIONAL TREASURE (PG) 1:00, 4:00, 7:15, 10:10
SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS (PG) 12:30, 2:45, 5:00
THE POLAR EXPRESS (G) 12:15, 2:30, 4:50, 7:10
RAY (PG13) 7:00, 10:05
SIDEWAYS (R) 1:30, 4:45, 7:30, 10:10

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SPANGLISH (PG13) ✓ 12:45, 2:10, 4:00, 5:00, 6:50, 8:00, 9:45
OCEAN'S TWELVE (PG13) 12:35, 2:30, 3:15, 5:20, 5:55, 8:10, 9:00
OCEAN'S TWELVE (PG13) ✓ 1:35, 4:20, 7:10, 10:00
BLADE: TRINITY (R) 12:40, 1:50, 3:20, 4:30, 6:00, 7:00, 8:30, 9:35
CLOSER (R) 2:05, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50
ALEXANDER (R) 9:30 PM
CHRISTMAS WITH THE KRANKS (PG) 1:15, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 9:55
FINDING NEVERLAND (PG) 1:20, 5:15, 7:40, 9:50
NATIONAL TREASURE (PG) 1:25, 4:25, 7:15, 9:55
SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS (PG) 1:00, 3:05, 5:25
KINSEY (R) 2:00, 5:45, 8:15
THE POLAR EXPRESS (G) 1:10, 4:15, 7:15
THE INCREDIBLES (PG) 12:50, 4:05, 7:05, 9:40
RAY (PG13) 7:45

MAZZA GALLERIE

Jenifer and Wisconsin
202-537-9553

SPANGLISH (PG13) ✓ 12:30, 1:15, 3:30, 4:15, 6:30, 7:15, 9:30, 10:00
OCEAN'S TWELVE (PG13) 1:00, 1:30, 3:45, 4:20, 7:00, 7:30, 9:45, 10:10
BRIDGET JONES 2 (R) 7:45, 10:05
NATIONAL TREASURE (PG) 12:00, 12:35, 3:00, 3:35, 5:45, 6:40, 8:30, 9:35
THE POLAR EXPRESS (G) 12:45, 3:05, 5:30

ACADEMY 8

Beltway Plaza on Greenbelt Rd., Center Court
703-998-4AMC

FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX (PG13) 1:50, 4:50, 7:40, 10:20
LEMONY SNICKET (PG) 1:40, 4:40, 7:30, 10:00
SPANGLISH (PG13) 1:20, 4:20, 7:20, 10:10
OCEAN'S TWELVE (PG13) 1:00, 2:00, 4:30, 5:10, 7:20, 8:00, 10:10, 10:40
BLADE: TRINITY (R) 12:50, 1:30, 4:00, 5:00, 7:00, 7:50, 9:50, 10:30
NATIONAL TREASURE (PG) 1:10, 4:10, 7:10, 10:00

COLUMBIA MALL 14

10300 Patuxent Parkway
410-423-0520

FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX (PG13) ✓ 1:50, 4:40, 7:30, 10:15
LEMONY SNICKET (PG) ✓ 1:20, 4:10, 7:00, 9:50
SPANGLISH (PG13) ✓ 12:50, 4:00, 7:05, 10:10
OCEAN'S TWELVE (PG13) 1:10, 2:00, 4:20, 7:25, 10:25
BLADE: TRINITY (R) 12:40, 3:20, 7:45, 10:30
CLOSER (R) 12:30, 2:50, 5:20, 8:00, 10:35
CHRISTMAS WITH THE KRANKS (PG) 1:40, 4:15, 6:50, 9:45
FINDING NEVERLAND (PG) 2:20, 4:50, 7:25, 9:55
NATIONAL TREASURE (PG) 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30
NATIONAL TREASURE (PG) ✓ 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30
SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS (PG) 12:30, 2:40, 5:00
THE POLAR EXPRESS (G) 2:30, 5:05, 7:40, 10:05
THE INCREDIBLES (PG) 2:00, 4:55, 7:50, 10:35
SIDEWAYS (R) 1:15, 4:15, 7:10, 10:00

COUNTRY CLUB MALL 6

Country Club Mall on Vocke Rd near Route 68.
703-998-4AMC

FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX (PG13) ✓ 1:30, 4:15, 7:15, 9:45
LEMONY SNICKET (PG) ✓ 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:05
SPANGLISH (PG13) ✓ 1:15, 4:00, 7:00, 9:55
CHRISTMAS WITH THE KRANKS (PG) 12:00, 2:20, 4:45, 7:15, 9:30
NATIONAL TREASURE (PG) 1:15, 4:00, 7:00, 9:55
SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS (PG) 12:15, 2:20, 5:00
THE POLAR EXPRESS (G) 7:30, 9:45

UNION STATION 9

Located at Union Station
703-998-4AMC

FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX (PG13) ✓ 1:45, 4:30, 7:30
LEMONY SNICKET (PG) ✓ 2:10, 5:00, 8:00
OCEAN'S TWELVE (PG13) 1:45, 2:15, 4:30, 5:15, 7:30, 8:15
BLADE: TRINITY (R) 2:00, 2:30, 4:45, 5:30, 7:50, 8:30
NATIONAL TREASURE (PG) 2:30, 5:30, 8:30
SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS (PG) 2:15, 5:15
THE INCREDIBLES (PG) 2:00, 4:45, 7:50
RAY (PG13) 7:40

RIVERTOWNE 12

Exit 4A I-95, 1/2 mi. on Oxon Hill Rd.
703-998-4AMC

FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX (PG13) 5:30, 8:00
LEMONY SNICKET (PG) 5:50, 8:30
OCEAN'S TWELVE (PG13) 5:00, 5:40, 7:40, 8:20
BLADE: TRINITY (R) 5:20, 6:00, 7:50, 8:30
CHRISTMAS WITH THE KRANKS (PG) 5:50, 8:20
NATIONAL TREASURE (PG) 5:10, 8:00
SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS (PG) 6:00, 8:10
THE POLAR EXPRESS (G) 5:20, 7:50
THE INCREDIBLES (PG) 5:10, 7:40
RAY (PG13) 5:00, 8:10

ACADEMY 6

Beltway Plaza on Greenbelt Rd., West Court
703-998-4AMC

ALEXANDER (R) 9:50 PM
CHRISTMAS WITH THE KRANKS (PG) 12:50, 3:10, 5:30, 7:50, 10:10
SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS (PG) 12:40, 2:50, 5:00
AFTER THE SUNSET (PG13) 1:30, 4:20, 7:00, 9:40
THE POLAR EXPRESS (G) 1:20, 4:30, 7:20
THE INCREDIBLES (PG) 1:10, 4:40, 7:40, 10:30
RAY (PG13) 1:00, 4:00, 7:10, 10:20
THE GRUDGE (PG13) 7:30, 10:00

SPRINGFIELD MALL 10

Loisdale and Franconia Road
703-971-3991

FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX (PG13) ✓ 2:10, 5:10, 8:30
LEMONY SNICKET (PG) ✓ 2:00, 4:40, 8:15
SPANGLISH (PG13) ✓ 1:30, 4:30, 8:30
OCEAN'S TWELVE (PG13) 1:45, 4:50, 7:30, 8:45
BLADE: TRINITY (R) 2:20, 5:20, 8:45
CHRISTMAS WITH THE KRANKS (PG) 1:45, 5:00, 8:15
NATIONAL TREASURE (PG) 1:30, 4:30, 8:00
SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS (PG) 2:15, 5:00, 8:00
THE POLAR EXPRESS (G) 2:00, 5:00
THE INCREDIBLES (PG) 1:50, 4:40, 7:45

GET REAL: You can own a piece of reality — or some TV loser's ice cream-stained smock. Props from the reality contests "The Apprentice" and "Survivor" are



being shilled on eBay, for charity of course. Proceeds benefit the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation; the Yasur tribe flag looks cool in your dorm room.

Entertainment

Undecided and the Undead

An indie comedy and a horror sendup lead a new batch of DVDs

DVDs | "Napoleon Dynamite" (20th Century Fox), the sweet little indie comedy, stars newcomer Jon Heder as the frizzy-haired title character,

a high-school outsider with a long-suffering attitude whose geeky family and friends find small triumphs in a world that previously cast them adrift.

Heder and writer-director Jared Hess provide commentary, and the disc has deleted footage and a making-of featurette on the

wedding scene that was tacked on to the film as an epilogue during its theatrical run.

In "Shaun of the Dead" (Universal), writer-director Edgar Wright spins a raucous, clever twist on the flesh-munching zombie genre as a little band of Brits fends off the undead with bad rifle aim and



The anti-zombie squad in "Shaun."

blows to the head delivered with occasional apologies.

Cast, crew and assorted zombies participate in commentary, and the DVD has outtakes and a deleted scene.

The disc also features a sly series of comic-panel storyboards with narration by co-star and co-writer Simon Pegg as well as a couple of his co-stars to fill in gaps and unexplained moments in the movie.

DAVID GERMAIN (AP)

express ➔ movie showtimes

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Showtimes for: 12/21/04

MAGIC JOHNSON THEATRES
CAPITAL CENTER
800 Shopper's way, Large 301-324-4220

Reel Mom's Today 11:00 a.m.
LEMONY SNICKET

BLADE: TRINITY (R) (11:40 12:40 1:45 2:40 3:40 5:40) 6:40 7:20
8:00 8:40 9:00 9:40 10:30
THE POLAR EXPRESS (G) (11:50 2:30 5:30)
★ FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX (PG-13) (11:00 1:50 4:50) 7:50 10:50
CHRISTMAS WITH THE KRANKS (PG) (11:10 1:40 4:10) 6:45 9:10
NATIONAL TREASURE (PG) (1:00 4:00) 7:00 10:00
THE SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS MOVIE (PG) (11:05 1:05 4:05) 7:05
★ LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS (PG)
(2:00 4:40) 7:40 10:40
RAY (PG-13) (11:30 3:00) 6:30 10:35
THE INCREDIBLES (PG) (12:00 3:05) 6:05 9:05
OCEAN'S TWELVE (PG-13) (11:05 1:05 4:05) 7:05 (11:15 11:45 2:15 4:15 5:15) 8:15 10:05 10:45

Cineplex Odeon WISCONSIN AVE. CINEMAS
4000 Wisconsin Avenue N.W. 202-244-0882

★ LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS (PG) (1:20 3:50) 6:20 9:10
★ FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX (PG-13) (1:40 4:20) 7:00 9:40
CLOSER (R) (1:30 4:00) 6:40 9:30
ALEXANDER (R) 8:40
FINDING NEVERLAND (PG) (1:50 4:15) 9:15
THE SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS MOVIE (PG) (1:10 3:00 4:50) 6:45
THE INCREDIBLES (PG) (1:00 3:40) 6:30 9:00

Loews WHITE FLINT 5
North Bethesda 310-423-1014

★ LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS (PG) (1:30 4:10) 6:45 9:10
★ SPANGLISH (PG-13) (1:00 3:45) 6:30 9:15
NATIONAL TREASURE (PG) (1:10 3:50) 6:40 9:20
★ OCEAN'S TWELVE (PG-13) (1:20 4:00) 6:50 9:30
RAY (PG-13) 9:00
THE POLAR EXPRESS (G) (1:40 3:55) 6:20

Cineplex Odeon SHIRLINGTON 7
2772 South Randolph 703-671-0978

SIDEWAYS (R) (1:20 4:10) 7:00 9:50
CLOSER (R) (ON 2 SCREENS) (12:50 1:10 3:50 4:30) 6:40 7:10 9:10 10:00
KINSEY (R) (12:40 3:30) 6:30 9:30
★ HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS (PG-13) (1:30 4:20) 7:20 9:40
BEING JULIA (R) (1:00 3:20) 6:20 8:50
THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES (R) (12:30) 6:10
BRIDGET JONES: THE EDGE OF REASON (R) (3:10) 9:00

Loews WHEATON PLAZA 11
Wheaton Plaza Shopping Center,
Viers Mill Rd. Btwn. Georgia & University 901-948-9202

OCEAN'S TWELVE (PG-13) (ON 2 SCREENS) (12:30 1:30 4:10) 6:50 7:20 10:10
RAY (PG-13) 7:00 10:00
BLADE: TRINITY (R) (ON 2 SCREENS) (12:20 3:00 4:15 5:30) 8:00 9:40 10:20
THE POLAR EXPRESS (G) (2:10 5:00)
THE INCREDIBLES (PG) (12:10 2:50 5:20) 8:05 10:30
ALEXANDER (R) 9:00
★ SPANGLISH (PG-13) (12:00 3:10) 6:20 9:10
THE SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS MOVIE (PG) (1:10 3:40) 6:40
NATIONAL TREASURE (PG) (1:00 4:00) 7:10 10:00
★ FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX (PG-13) (2:00 4:30) 7:05 9:40
★ LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS (PG) (1:40 4:20) 7:30 9:50
CLOSER (R) (12:40 3:20) 6:10 9:20

CINEPLEX ODEON CINEMA
5100 Wisconsin Avenue 202-966-7248

★ A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT (R) (1:45 4:45) 8:00

Cineplex Odeon TYSONS FARIFAX SQUARE
8065 Leesburgh Pike 703-506-9857

Reel Mom's Today 11:00 a.m.
SPANGLISH

THE INCREDIBLES (PG) (1:10 3:40) 6:40 9:20
NATIONAL TREASURE (PG) (12:30 3:20) 6:50 9:45
★ LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS (PG) (12:00 2:20 4:40) 7:00 9:30
★ SPANGLISH (PG-13) (11:00 3:30) 6:30 9:40
CLOSER (R) (12:20 2:50 5:10) 7:30 10:10
OCEAN'S TWELVE (PG-13) (12:50 3:50) 7:10 9:50
★ FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX (PG-13) (12:10 2:30 4:50) 7:20 10:00
THE POLAR EXPRESS (G) (1:00 4:00) 6:20
ALEXANDER (R) 9:10

Cineplex Odeon DUPONT CIRCLE 5
1350 19th Street 202-972-9956

WHAT THE BLEEP! DO WE KNOW? (NR) (1:40 4:20) 7:10 9:50
THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES (R) (1:00 3:50) 6:50 9:45
BRIDGET JONES: THE EDGE OF REASON (R) (2:00 4:40) 7:20 10:00
KINSEY (R) (ON 2 SCREENS) (12:50 1:20 3:40 4:10) 6:20 7:00 9:10 9:40

FOR DETAILS ABOUT REEL MOMS
VISIT www.enjoytheshow.com

Loews GEORGETOWN
3111 K Street, N.W. 202-342-6033

Reel Mom's Today 11:00 a.m.
SPANGLISH

★ SPANGLISH (PG-13) (ON 2 SCREENS) (12:30 1:50 3:20 4:40) 6:10 7:30 9:00 10:20
★ HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS (PG-13) (1:20 4:00) 6:40 9:20
★ FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX (PG-13) (1:00 3:50) 6:30 9:10
★ LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS (PG) (11:30 2:00 4:30) 7:10 9:40
OCEAN'S TWELVE (PG-13) (ON 2 SCREENS) (1:10 4:50) 7:00 8:30 9:50
CLOSER (R) (12:40 3:00 5:20) 7:40 10:00
FINDING NEVERLAND Rear Window Captioning (PG) (12:00 2:20 5:00) 8:10 10:30
SIDEWAYS (R) (1:30 4:20) 7:20 10:10
NATIONAL TREASURE (PG) (12:20 3:10) 6:00 8:50
BLADE: TRINITY (R) (12:10 3:50 5:30) 8:20 10:50
THE INCREDIBLES (PG) (11:50 2:30) 10:40
RAY (PG-13) (11:20) 6:20
ALEXANDER (R) (2:40) 9:30
THE POLAR EXPRESS (G) (11:40 2:10)
★ MEET THE FOCKERS (PG-13) (12:01 Midnight)
★ THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA (PG-13) 12:02 Midnight

Cineplex Odeon UPTOWN
3426 Connecticut Avenue 202-966-8805

RAY (PG-13) (1:00 4:30) 8:00
Advanced tickets on sale now for The Aviator

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**Weekend Pass.
Thursdays.**

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GALLERY PLACE STADIUM 14 701 Seventh St NW 800-FANDANGO 1721#
Adv. Tix on Sale MEET THE FOCKERS (PG-13) ★ (110 140 410) 645 920
LEMONY SNICKET'S SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS (PG) Dig (106 400) 700 955
SPANGLISH (PG-13) Dig ★ (Stadium) (110 140 410) 645 920
FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX (PG-13) Dig (Stadium) (1115 150 425) 705 940
OPEN CAPTIONED: POLAR EXPRESS (G) Dig (Stadium) (315) 715
BLADE: TRINITY (R) - ID REQ'D Dig (Stadium) (1105 1145 140 220 415 510) 655 745 935 1025
CLOSER (R) - ID REQ'D Dig (Stadium) (1205 115 235 355 515) 650 750 825 1030
ALEXANDER (R) - ID REQ'D Dig (Stadium) (1220 405) 800
FINDING NEVERLAND (PG) Dig (Stadium) (1200 230 500) 735 1010
NATIONAL TREASURE (PG) Dig (Stadium) (130 435) 640 730 945 1020
SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS (PG) Dig (Stadium) (1245 250 505) 625 1030
BRIDGET JONES: THE EDGE OF REASON (R) - ID REQ'D Dig (Stadium) 720 950
POLAR EXPRESS (G) Dig (Stadium) (1130 200 420) 720 950
THE INCREDIBLES (PG) Dig (Stadium) (1100 145 430) 715 1005
RAY (PG-13) Dig (Stadium) (1155) 1000

BALLSTON COMMON STADIUM 12 Ballston Common Mall, Glebe Rd. Arlington (703) 527-9466 800-FANDANGO 377#
Adv. Tix on Sale MEET THE FOCKERS (PG-13) ★ (125 415) 705 1000
HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS (PG-13) Dig (1200 240 515) 800 1035
★ SPANGLISH (PG-13) Dig ★ (135 430) 730 1025
OCEAN'S TWELVE (PG-13) Dig (1205 1245 130 225 305 345 435 520) 615 700 740 820 910 955 1030
FINDING NEVERLAND (PG) Dig (120 350) 645 735 915 1015
KINSEY (R) - ID REQ'D Dig (1250 440) 720 1005
BRIDGET JONES: THE EDGE OF REASON (R) - ID REQ'D Dig (1155 235 505) 750 1020
THE INCREDIBLES (PG) Dig (1210 140 300 425) 610 905

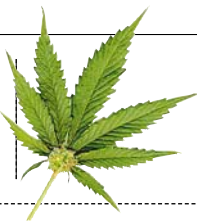
ROCKVILLE CENTER STADIUM 13 Rockville Town Center (301) 340-9390 800-FANDANGO 248#
Adv. Tix on Sale MEET THE FOCKERS (PG-13) ★ (110 410) 720 1010
FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX (PG-13) ★ (1200 245 530) 810 1050
LEMONY SNICKET'S SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS (PG) ★ (1210 355) 710 1020
★ SPANGLISH (PG-13) Dig ★ (1230 100 330 400) 700 800 1000
OCEAN'S TWELVE (PG-13) (1245 115 345 415) 715 815 1015
CLOSER (R) - ID REQ'D (1205 300) 640 935
FINDING NEVERLAND (PG) (1215 320) 650 920
NATIONAL TREASURE (PG) (1240 350) 655 1005
SIDEWAYS (R) - ID REQ'D (125 435) 740 1040
SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS (PG) (120 340) 645 915
THE INCREDIBLES (PG) (1235 335) 630 930

POTOMAC YARD STADIUM 16 3575 Jefferson Davis Hwy 800-FANDANGO 690#
Adv. Tix on Sale MEET THE FOCKERS (PG-13) ★ (110 200 440) 725 1010
FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX (PG-13) Dig (Stadium) (1105 1230 150 350 430) 630 710 905 945
LEMONY SNICKET'S SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS (PG) Dig (Stadium) (1215 110 330 410) 640 740 1000 1035
OCEAN'S TWELVE (PG-13) Dig (Stadium) (1120 1200 205 310 500) 650
BLADE: TRINITY (R) - ID REQ'D Dig (Stadium) (1100 1130 1250 140 210 340 420 450) 635 700 730 920 950 1020
CHRISTMAS WITH THE KRANKS (PG) Dig (Stadium) (1135 200 425) 645 930
FINDING NEVERLAND (PG) Dig (Stadium) (1140 215 445) 715 955
NATIONAL TREASURE (PG) Dig (Stadium) (1220 325) 620 910
SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS (PG) Dig (Stadium) (1150 240 510) 625 910
POLAR EXPRESS (G) Dig (Stadium) (1115 155 435) 655
THE INCREDIBLES (PG) Dig (Stadium) (1210 320) 625 915
RAY (PG-13) Dig (Stadium)

BETHESDA 10 7272 Wisconsin Avenue 800-FANDANGO 569#
Adv. Tix on Sale MEET THE FOCKERS (PG-13) ★ (1220 330) 700 930
LEMONY SNICKET'S SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS (PG) Dig (1230 340) 620 925
★ SPANGLISH (PG-13) Dig ★ (1215 310) 635 1005
FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX (PG-13) Dig (1225 345) 635 110 940 1000
HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS (PG-13) Dig (1210 330) 630 945
OCEAN'S TWELVE (PG-13) Dig (1235 420) 720 1010
NATIONAL TREASURE (PG) Dig (1230 320) 620 910
BLADE: TRINITY (R) - ID REQ'D Dig (1235 420) 720 1010
CHRISTMAS WITH THE KRANKS (PG) Dig (1230 320) 620 910
THE INCREDIBLES (PG) Dig (1205 315) 650 935
POLAR EXPRESS (G) Dig (1240 350) 625 915
OPEN CAPTIONED: ALFIE (R) - ID REQ'D Dig (400) 655

Now Hiring-Apply at Theatre

Times For 12/21/04 ©2004 www.REGmovies.com



FAR OUT: What are they smoking at Showtime? The cable channel is turning a stage musical of the hysterical 1936 anti-“marihuana” cult movie “Reefer Madness” into a movie. The Kevin Murphy-Dan Studney songs are ready for their red-eyed closeup.

ON TV TONIGHT

THE FINAL FRONTIER

Thirty-six Christmas Eves ago, television viewers cast their eyes at the heavens: The Apollo 8 spacecraft entered lunar orbit and sent back video of the moon's desolate surface and the first images of Earth from the vantage point of another heavenly body. To celebrate this remarkable anniversary, LeVar Burton hosts **MISSION SPACE** (8 p.m., PAX), a one-hour glance at the past, present and future of space exploration.

WATER, WATER, EVERYWHERE

EXPEDITIONS TO THE EDGE (8 p.m., National Geographic Channel) recalls a 1997 cave exploration plagued by injuries and unexpected flooding. More than 200 volunteers raced against time to keep a team of 11 geologists from drowning deep below



Pro wrestler Lori and her much-talked-about (by her) implants amazingly race.

the Earth's surface.

A WORLD OF FUN

THE AMAZING RACE (8 p.m., CBS) Panting, scheming and screaming.

GO HOME, YAYA!

A trip to Tokyo on **THE REBEL BILLIONAIRE** (8 p.m., Fox). Let's hope they don't run into any stragglers from "America's Next Top Model."

STRONG MEDICINE

HOUSE (9 p.m., Fox) A young boy becomes the principal support for his mentally ill mother.

CULT CHOICE

LOVE AND DEATH ON LONG ISLAND (9 p.m., Independent Film Channel) An emotionally detached British novelist (John Hurt) develops a profound fixation on the shallow star (Jason Priestley) of gross-out teen comedies in this wistful adaptation of "Death in Venice." KEVIN MCDONOUGH (UNITED FEATURE SYNDICATE)

Tip of the Top Hat

The Kennedy Center Honors celebrates the arts with a gala

NODS | Taped earlier this month, “The 27th Annual Kennedy Center Honors: A Celebration of the Performing Arts” (9 p.m., CBS) airs tonight.

The ceremony recognizes the artistic contributions of actor, producer, writer and director Warren Beatty; husband-and-wife actors, writers and producers Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee; singer and composer Elton John; soprano Joan Sutherland; and composer and



Some of the honorees acknowledge the crowd and congratulate each other.

conductor John Williams.

Caroline Kennedy returns to host; President Bush and first lady Laura Bush are among those in attendance. KEVIN MCDONOUGH (UNITED FEATURE SYNDICATE)

	12.21.04	6:00 PM	6:30	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30		
LOCAL CHANNELS	WRC	(4) News		NBC Nightly News	Access Hollywood	The Biggest Loser (N)		Father of Pride	Scrubs	Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		News	The Tonight Show		
	WTTG	(5) The Simpsons	The Simpsons	Friends	Seinfeld	Billionaire: Quest for Best		House "The Socratic Method" (N)		News		Friends	Drew Carey		
	WJLA	(7) News	ABC Wld News	Wheel of Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	My Wife and Kids		George Lopez	According to Jim		Rodney "Pilot"	NYPD Blue (N)	(PA)	News	(35) Nightline
	WUSA	(9) News	CBS News	USA Tonight	Ent. Tonight	The Amazing Race 6 (N)		The 27th Annual Kennedy Center Honors (N)		Nova "Elegant Universe"		News		(35) Late Show	
	WDCA	(20) Girlfriends	Girlfriends	Malcolm-Mid.	Malcolm-Mid.	All of Us		Eve	Veronica Mars "The Girl Next Door"		That '70s Show		That '70s Show	Every-Raymond	Dharma & Greg
	WMPT	(22) The NewsHour With Jim Lehrer (N)	Business Rpt.	Business Rpt.	Outdoors Md.	Nova "Elegant Universe" "Einstein's Dream; The String's the Thing"		Nova "Elegant Universe"		Time to Remember					
	WETA	(26) BBC World News	Business Rpt.	The NewsHour With Jim Lehrer (N)	Nova "Death Star"	(DVS)	The Video Game Revolution Growth of industry.		BBC World News		Tavis Smiley	Charlie Rose (N)		Charlie Rose (N)	
	WHUT	(32) Business Schl	Front and Center	BBC World News	MoneyWise	American Experience	History Detectives		BBC World News		Tavis Smiley	Charlie Rose (N)		Charlie Rose (N)	
WBDC	(50) The Parkers	Steve Harvey	The Parkers	Steve Harvey	Gilmore Girls "Written in the Stars"		High School Reunion (N)		Will & Grace		Just Shoot Me	Will & Grace	Blind Date (N)		
BASIC CABLE	A&E	City Confidential		American Justice: Payback		Biography "Tatum O'Neal" (N)		Cold Case Files "Doench; Peace" (N)		Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Crossing Jordan "John Doe"			
	Animal	The Crocodile Hunter		Most Extreme "Defenders"		Austin Stevens: Snakemaster		Most Extreme Lethal injections.		Animal Cops Detroit "Cold Calls"		Austin Stevens: Snakemaster			
	BET	106 & Park: BET's Top 10 Live		BET Style		The Parkers		Girlfriends	Christmas Memories (N)		Club Comic View		BET Nightly News	BET Style	
	Bravo	(4:30) *** "Working Girl" (1988)		The West Wing "Posse Comitatus"		*** "Silverado" (1985) Kevin Kline, Scott Glenn. The paths of four cowboys converge en route to a showdown.								The West Wing "Posse Comitatus"	
	Comedy	Shorties Watchin'	Stranger-Candy	Stranger-Candy	Mad TV Bon Jovi.	Reel Comedy (N)	Crank Yankers	Reno 911!	South Park	Chappelle's Show	Crank Yankers (N)	Com.-Presents	Chappelle's Show		
	Court	NYPD Blue "This Old Spouse"	Cops	Cops	Cops	The Investigators		Forensic Files	North Mission	Masterminds (N)	Caught	Extreme Evidence		Extreme Evidence	
	Discovery	Monster Nation Outboard motor.		American Chopper		Dr. G: Medical Examiner		Mummy Autopsy (N)		Wing Nuts "Bombs Away"		Dr. G: Medical Examiner			
	DISCH	Chicago Hope		Trauma: Life in the ER		Conjoined Twins		Conjoined Twins: Critical Decision		Conjoined Twins: Separate Risks		Conjoined Twins			
	Disney	Even Stevens	Lizzie McGuire	Sister, Sister	That's So Raven	** "Sister Act 2: Back in the Habit" (1993) Whoopi Goldberg.		Lizzie McGuire		Sister, Sister	Even Stevens	Boy Meets World			
	E!	Love Is in the Heir	Love Is in the Heir	E! News (N)	Holidays-Stars	Survivor: The E! True Hollywood Story		The reality show, "Survivor."		Life Is Great	Diary of an Affair	Howard Stern	Howard Stern		
	FX	Fear Factor	King of the Hill	King of the Hill	House Hunters	* "Dude, Where's My Car?" (2000) Ashton Kutcher, Seann William Scott.		Fear Factor		Designers'	Designers'	King of the Hill	King of the Hill		
	HGTV	Wknd Warriors	Landscapers	Kurb Appeal	Designer Finals	Designed to Sell		Decorating Cents	Divine Design	Designers'	Designers'	Painted House	Crafters Coast		
	Family	7th Heaven		Life and Adventures of Santa Claus		"Eloise at Christmastime" (2003) Julie Andrews, Sofia Vassilieva.		Whose Line?		Whose Line?	The 700 Club				
	History	Weather at War Water deprivation.		Modern Marvels "Satellites"		Wild West Tech "Freak Show Tech"		Modern Marvels Fighting fire with fire.		Modern Marvels (N)		Modern Marvels "Dangerous Cargo"			
	Lifetime	The Golden Girls		"Christmas Child" (2003, Drama) William R. Moses, Megan Follows.		** "Charms for the Easy Life" (2002) Gena Rowlands. Premiere.		The Nanny		The Golden Girls					
	MTV	Made Step team.	Made Formal dance.	Made Football player.	MTV Cribs	MTV Cribs	MTV Cribs	MTV Cribs	MTV Cribs	R. Wrld Chal.	R. Wrld Chal.				
	NICK	Hey Arnold!	Rugrats	Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Oddparents	SpongeBob	Teenage Robot	Fat Albert Mov.	The Cosby Show	The Cosby Show	The Cosby Show	Fatherhood	Fatherhood (N)		
	SCIFI	Stargate SG-1 "Entropy"	UFO Invasion at Rendlesham Host Bryant Gumbel.	The Roswell Crash: Startling New Evidence		** "Roswell: The Aliens Attack"		MXC							
SPIKE	World's Wildest Police Videos		CSI: Crime Scene Investigation		CSI: Crime Scene Investigation		The Real Gilligan's Island (N)		Sex and the City	Sex and the City	(10) The Real Gilligan's Island				
TBS	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Every-Raymond	Every-Raymond	The Real Gilligan's Island (N)		The Real Gilligan's Island		Sex and the City	Sex and the City	(10) The Real Gilligan's Island				
TLC	Clean Sweep "All American Mess"		In a Fix Unfinished projects.		American Hot Rod		Overhaulin' "52 Pickup" (N)		Rides "Tonight's Ride" (N)	American Hot Rod					
TNT	Charmed	Law & Order "Panic"	(DVS)	Law & Order "The Ring"	Law & Order "Judge Dread"	Charmed "Once in a Blue Moon"	Law & Order "Switch"	Law & Order "Special Victims Unit"	Monk "Mr. Monk Takes a Vacation"	Law & Order: Special Victims Unit					
USA	* "Sgt. Bilko" (1996, Comedy) Steve Martin, Dan Aykroyd.		I Love the '70s "1976"		I Love the '70s "1977"		I Love the '70s "1978"		I Love the '70s "1979"		25 Most Cheesetastic TV Stars		I Love the '70s "1970"		
VHI	I Love the '70s "1976"		I Love the '70s "1977"		I Love the '70s "1978"		I Love the '70s "1979"		25 Most Cheesetastic TV Stars		I Love the '70s "1970"				
SPAN.	TELEM	Corte-Pueblo	Noti-Telemndo	Anita No Te Rajes	La Mujer en el Espejo	Gitanas	Te Voy a Enseñar a Querer	Noticiero Tel.	Laura						
	UNIV	Viviana	Noticiero Univ	La Mujer de Madera	Rubi	Amor Real	Veremos Todo con Niurka	Primer Impacto	Noticiero Univ.						
	ESPN	SportsCenter (Live)	Bowl Mania	(4:5) College Football Champs Sports Bowl -- Georgia Tech vs. Syracuse. From Orlando, Fla. (Live)	(4:5) SportsCenter (Live)										
ESPN2	Series-Poker	NFL Live	College Basketball Iowa vs. Texas Tech. From Chicago. (Live)	College Basketball UCLA at Michigan State. (Live)	ESPN2: Who's No. 1										
CSN	I, Max (N)	SportsNite	MISL Soccer St. Louis Steamers at Baltimore Blast. (Taped)	Pro View	SportsNite	NBA Basketball Washington Wizards at Sacramento Kings. (Live)									
NEWS	CNN	Lou Dobbs Tonight	Anderson Cooper 360	Paula Zahn Now	Larry King Live	NewsNight With Aaron Brown	Lou Dobbs Tonight								
	FNC	Special Report (Live)	The Fox Report With Shepard Smith	The O'Reilly Factor (Live)	Hannity & Colmes (Live)	On the Record-Van Susteren	The O'Reilly Factor								
	MSNBC	The Abrams Report (Live)	Hardball (Live)	Countdown With Keith Olbermann	Deborah Norville Tonight Surgery.	Scarborough Country (Live)	Hardball								
MOVIES	AMC	(1:5) *** "A Christmas Carol" (1951, Fantasy) Alastair Sim. 'NR'		*** "Two Mules for Sister Sara" (1970) Clint Eastwood. 'PG'		(1:5) *** "A Big Hand for the Little Lady" (1966) Henry Fonda. 'NR'									
	TCM	(5:30) * "Crime of Passion" (1957) Barbara Stanwyck: Kid and Desire		*** "The Diary of Anne Frank" (1959, Drama) Joseph Schildkraut, Millie Perkins, Shelley Winters. 'NR'		"The Greatest Story Ever Told" 'G'									
	HBO	(5:00) Daredevil	Daredevil: First	(1:5) * "Catch That Kid" (2004, Adventure) Kristen Stewart. 'PG'	** "Chasing Liberty" (2004) Mandy Moore, Jeremy Piven.	PG-13'	Carnivale "Lonignon, Texas"								
	MAX	Thunderheart 'R'	** "National Security" (2003) Martin Lawrence. 'PG-13'	** "Stuck on You" (2003, Comedy) Matt Damon.	PG-13'	** "Broken Lizard's Club Dread" (2004) Bill Paxton. 'R'	Out for Justice 'R'								
	SHOW	"Sister Act 2: Back in the Habit" 'PG'	(1:5) ** "Barbershop" (2002, Comedy) Ice Cube. iTV.	PG-13'	*** "Standing in the Shadows of Motown" (2002) iTV.	PG'	*** "Year of the Bull" (2003) 'NR'								
	TMC	(1:5) ** "Grandview, U.S.A." (1984, Drama) Jamie Lee Curtis. 'R'	*** "Flatliners" (1990, Suspense) Kiefer Sutherland.	R'	** "Candyman" (1992) Virginia Madsen.	R'	(4:5) * Miranda								
	STARZ!	(5:30) *** "The Station Agent" 'R'	(0:5) ** "Radio" (2003, Drama) Cuba Gooding Jr., Ed Harris.	PG'	*** "Scream" (1996, Horror) Neve Campbell, David Arquette.	R'	"Dumb and Dumberer: When Harry"								
ENCORE	(0:5) *** "9 to 5" (1980, Comedy) Jane Fonda, Dolly Parton. 'PG'		** "Big Trouble in Little China" (1986) Kurt Russell.		(4:5) *** "The Horse Whisperer" (1998, Drama) Robert Redford, Sam Neill.	PG-13'									

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Education

More U.S. undergrads pursuing education in foreign countries

It's about the adventure of an extended stay at a foreign university and getting away from home.

More high school students consider school outside the United States. Foreign universities smooth the logistics for enrollment and ride the U.S. college fair circuit to promote their schools.

In Canada, the number of American undergraduates and graduate students has more than doubled since 1997 to about 6,000. In Great Britain, the number of full-time American undergrads is up 53 percent since 2001 to about 2,300. About 1,600 Americans pursue undergraduate degrees in Australia; the overall number of Americans studying there rose 10 percent last year.

"It's a) high quality, b) good value and c) it's going to give the students

a very different educational experience," said Karen McBride, vice president for international affairs at the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada.

While roughly 175,000 students at American universities go abroad for a limited stay — nine times out of 10 for a semester or less — applicants see enrolling full time as a richer experience.

International Studies

"I don't think I'm going to miss out," said Susan Schell, a Birmingham, Ala., high school senior applying to English universities. To her, American college wouldn't be different from high school.

"There's a different aura," she said.

Sinead Keegan of Boston, a senior at McGill University in Montreal, said she gained independence — socially and academically — she wouldn't have gotten

in the United States.

"I'm better prepared to head out into the real world than people who have had their hands held," she said.

McGill has tripled its enroll-

OH, CANADA: Sinead Keegan said she's better off attending university in Montreal.



"I think I'm better prepared to head out into the real world than people who have their hands held all along."

SINEAD KEEGAN
SENIOR AT MCGILL UNIVERSITY
IN MONTREAL

The application process is easier than it used to be, with foreign schools considering the same materials American colleges require. Guidance counselors encourage students to explore the option.

But foreign universities charge international students several times more than domestic ones.

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Rob Pegoraro

Giving Gadgets

Post personal technology columnist **ROB PEGORARO** was online Monday to discuss hi-tech gadget gifts for the holiday | washingtonpost.com/liveonline

Have not seen anybody weigh-in on XM receivers — any thoughts on the Roady2 vs. MyFi?

We just reviewed the MyFi and found it a bit ... well, nerdy. I would get the Roady2 myself. It's a lot cheaper.

Can you recommend a relatively inexpensive device that I can use primarily for reading e-books on our overcrowded Metro trains? My inclination is a Palm OS-based handheld rather than a pocket PC.

Good idea. Get a Tungsten E or another Palm with a high-res screen, which will make books much more pleasant to read.

I'm thinking about getting a big screen TV, maybe a 50" DLP, in the \$2,500 to \$3,000-range. Will they come down in price after the holidays and the Super Bowl?

Their prices will keep declining, but I would expect them to hold steady starting a couple of weeks before the Super Bowl, not dropping further until afterwards. The guys running the stores ain't dumb; they know how many TVs move in

the weeks before the game.

We got a Kodak digital camera last Xmas and love seeing the pictures on our computer. But I'd like to be able to make prints easily. What do you recommend?

Order your prints online from a site like Ofoto, or take them into any camera store (Ritz, etc.) and get printouts there. This will almost certainly cost you less than making individual prints at home; it may even save time, considering how slowly inkjets work when printing out photos at max quality.

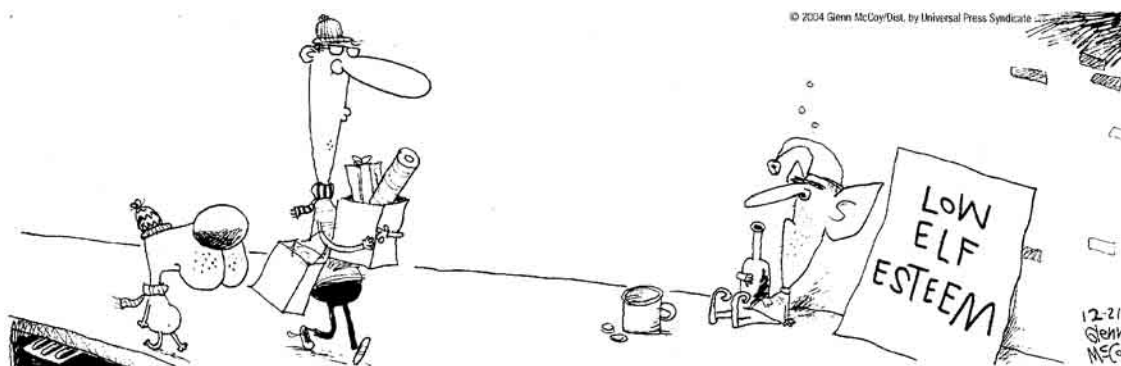
Which of the current portable DVD players is reliable and high-quality?

The current issue of Consumer Reports includes a roundup of these portables. They didn't find any major differences in quality — \$250 Mintek and Audiovox portables did about as well as Panasonic and Sony models that cost almost twice as much.

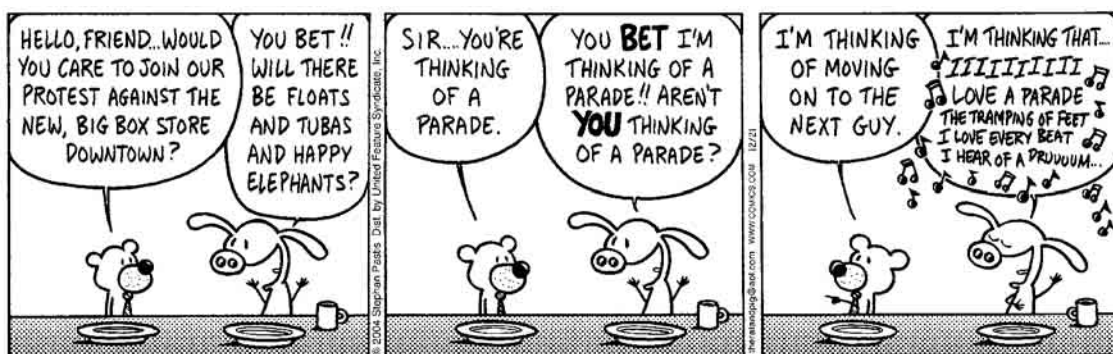
→ **Today on Live Online**

2 P.M.: Lon Anderson, of AAA Mid-Atlantic, discusses traveling for the holidays.

The Duplex | Glenn McCoy



Pearls Before Swine | Stephan Pastis



Letters

Ballerina Remark Off-Point

I MUST SAY THAT I was really annoyed to read the statement "All girls at a certain point dream to be a ballerina," by clothing designer Christiana Proietti in Wednesday's

article on ballerina-style fashions. What an awful generalization, based only on the source of the quote and her own childhood. As a woman who has never been fond of pink frilly stuff and other stereotypically "girly" things, I must say that "ballerina" was about as high on my list of things I wanted to be when I grow up as "garbage collector."

Engineer — yes, scientist — perhaps, but ballerina? You've got to be kidding.

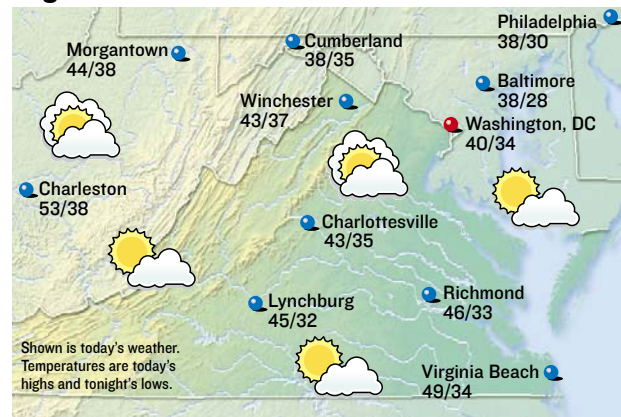
—YEVGENIYA NUSINOVICH
Washington, D.C.

✦ **Write to us:** Do you have something to say about events in the news or a story in today's newspaper? Drop us a line at inbox@readexpress.com

5 Day Forecast for the Washington Area

Today	Tonight	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Partly sunny, not as cold later 40°	Partly cloudy 34°	Milder, rain at night 50° / 45°	Heavy morning rain, windy, mild 54° / 38°	Blustery, turning colder 43° / 24°	Mostly cloudy, cold 30° / 20°

Regional Weather



Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.

All forecasts and maps provided by AccuWeather, Inc. ©2004

Almanac

Washington, D.C., through 4 p.m. Mon.

Temperature

High	23°
Low	11°
Normal high	46°
Normal low	31°
Average humidity	35%

Precipitation

24 hours ending 4 p.m.	0.07"
Month to date	2.16"
Normal month to date	1.95"
Year to date	41.60"
Last year to date	60.23"
Normal year to date	38.36"

For up-to-the-minute weather, see:
washingtonpost.com/weather

Regional Forecast

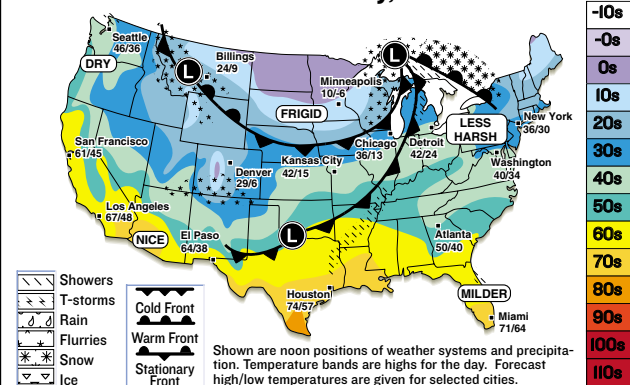
D.C. Metro: Today, partly sunny, not as cold in the afternoon. High 40. Wind southwest 8-16 mph. Tonight, partly cloudy. Low 34.

Sun and Moon

Sunrise today	7:23 a.m.
Sunset tonight	4:50 p.m.
Moonrise today	1:35 p.m.
Moonsset today	2:41 a.m.

Full	Last	New	First
Dec 26	Jan 3	Jan 10	Jan 17

National Weather for Tuesday, December 21



National Cities

City	Today	Wed.
Atlanta	50/40/s	58/40/r
Boston	32/30/s	46/40/pc
Chicago	36/13/pc	22/12/sf
Dallas	62/42/pc	43/23/r
Denver	29/6/sf	26/7/sf
Honolulu	83/67/sh	79/67/sh
Los Angeles	67/48/pc	70/42/s
Miami	71/64/sh	77/71/sh
New York City	36/30/pc	48/45/c
Orlando	68/54/s	76/62/sh
Seattle	46/36/pc	44/34/pc

World Cities

City	Today	Wed.
Amsterdam	38/32/sh	43/41/r
Athens	55/38/r	47/34/sh
Berlin	35/24/pc	34/33/r
Buenos Aires	82/63/s	86/68/s
Calgary	26/7/sf	11/2/sf
Dublin	46/41/pc	54/43/sh
Geneva	29/22/c	29/26/pc
Moscow	22/12/pc	21/12/pc
Rome	45/33/s	44/34/pc
Sydney	78/63/s	82/61/pc
Tokyo	52/35/s	46/32/pc

s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, i-ice.

LOOK out

People

MELEES

It's All Fun and Games Until Someone Uses a Knife

YOUNG BUCK was charged Monday with assault with a deadly weapon for allegedly stabbing a man during a melee at the Vibe Awards. The rapper, whose given name is David Darnell Brown, was accused of stab-

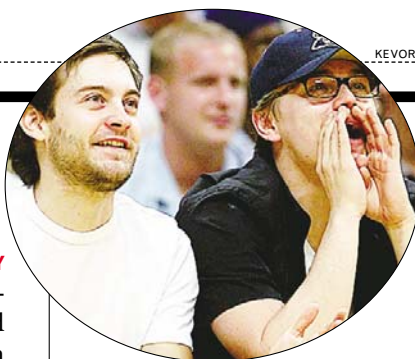


bing Jimmy James Johnson in retaliation after Johnson allegedly punched Brown's mentor, Dr. Dre, during the taping of the show on Nov. 15. Police issued an arrest warrant for Brown, 23, after authorities identified him on a videotape. Brown surrendered to police Nov. 19 and was freed on \$500,000 bail. If convicted, he faces up to eight years in prison, authorities said. (AP)

FORBIDDEN

The Best Publicity A Movie Can't Buy

LEONARDO DICAPRIO and **TOBEY MAGUIRE** have been sued by a producer who claims the two blocked distribution of a 1995 indie film they starred in. John Schindler says the actors warned distributors that DiCaprio wouldn't work with them if they released "Don's Plum." The Los Angeles Superior Court complaint, filed Friday, seeks \$38 million and unspecified damages. In



KEVORK DJANSEZIAN/AP

Leo and Tobey secretly enjoy being sued. Settling out of court is so fun!

1999, DiCaprio and Maguire settled a \$10 million lawsuit with another producer who accused them of preventing the movie's release. (AP)

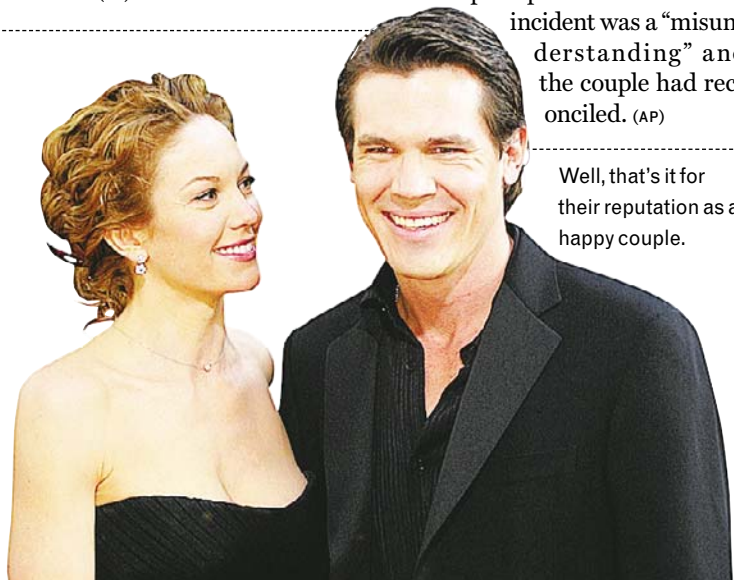
LAME EXCUSES

A 'Misunderstanding' Is Buying the Wrong Groceries

JOSH BROLIN was cited for misdemeanor domestic battery on Sunday after his wife, **DIANE LANE**, called police during an argument at the couple's home. Brolin was released on \$20,000 bail, a spokesman for the city attorney's office said Monday. No charges have been filed. The couple's spokeswoman said the

incident was a "misunderstanding" and the couple had reconciled. (AP)

Well, that's it for their reputation as a happy couple.



MARK J. TERRILL/AP

MISTAKES

A Series of Unfortunate, Yet Very Avoidable, Events

DMX was arrested for allegedly driving more than 100 mph in the suburbs of New York City, a week after he pleaded guilty to driving through an airport parking gate while on drugs. DMX, whose real name is Earl Simmons, was pulled over Wednesday after driving 104 mph in a 65 mph zone. Because his license is suspended, he was arrested on charges of third-degree aggravated unlicensed operation. State police said he was also charged with speeding and driving an unregistered vehicle. He was released on \$350 bail and must appear in court Jan. 18. (AP)



FOLLIES

Gandalf? Is That You?

Outside of America, one can see plays other than "A Christmas Carol" in December. And some of them can seem a little odd to us, like London's Old Vic theater's new production of "Aladdin," starring **IAN MCKELLEN** as the Widow Twankey—a role very unlike Gandalf in "The Lord of the Rings." (EXPRESS)

TOYING

Anna, Bored, Plays Mind Games With Press

Last week, **ANNA KOURNIKOVA** said she'd married **ENRIQUE IGLESIAS** in Mexico, according to US Weekly. "Enrique is great. Everything is

awesome. We are married," she reportedly said at a charity event. However, sources told People magazine that the two hadn't actually exchanged vows — and that the ring Kournikova was flaunting was one she's had for more than a

year. According to the story in US Weekly, the pair married on the beach in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, but officials in the region said no paperwork was filed. Publicists for both Kournikova and Iglesias refused to comment. (EXPRESS)

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1620

On Dec. 21, Pilgrims aboard the "Mayflower" went ashore for the first time at present-day Plymouth, Mass.; also, in 1898, scientists Pierre and Marie Curie discovered the radioactive element radium.

Asleep at the Wheel | Edited by Timothy E. Parker

ACROSS

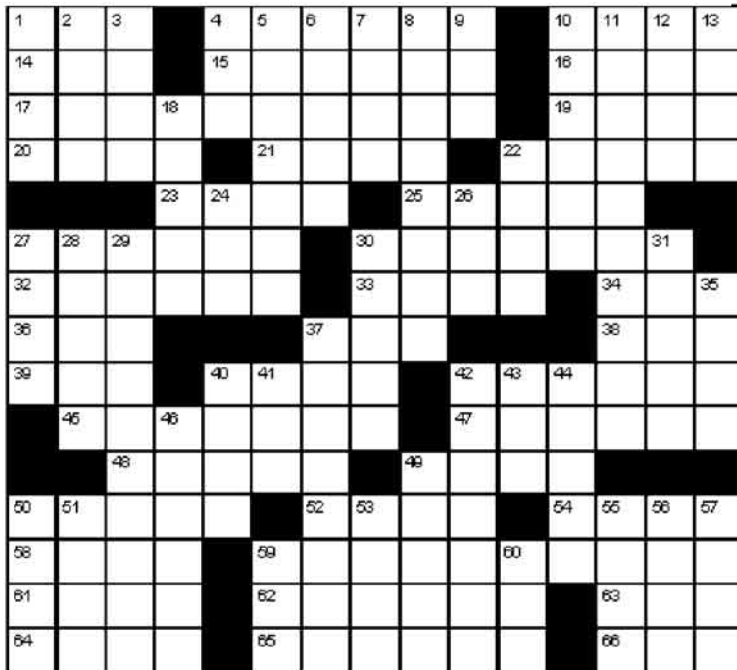
- 1 Girl or mule of song
4 2002 Al Pacino flick
10 Skip over
14 Old NBA rival
15 Camera steadier
16 ____ of the above
17 Mystification
19 Biblical book
20 Eye sore
21 It helps keep one focused
22 Catnaps
23 Agnes and Genevieve, for short
25 Bergman's "____ and Her Men"
27 Some vodka bottles
30 Ready for anything
32 Burdens
33 "Saving Private Ryan" ships
34 Prior to, in rhyme
36 Curved carpenter's tool
37 Friend's counterpart
38 Spill guard
39 Designer Claiborne
40 Roseanne, before Tom
42 Like movie houses and churches
45 Cut short, NASA-style
47 Frequent witness

DOWN

- 48 Practical
49 Late afternoon
50 "____ been that long?"
52 Yank crabgrass
54 Vicinity
58 Hep
59 Period of instability, perhaps
61 Lyric poems
62 Seeker of services
63 ____ "King" Cole
64 Funeral fire
65 "Sincerely," and others
66 Genetic ID

DOWN

- 1 Chumps
2 Come up against
3 Slothful
4 Letters on a Cardinal's cap
5 Without rancor
6 Charades players
7 Start the business day
8 "Tommyrot!"
9 N.Y.C. summer hrs.
10 Extra-inning score, perhaps
11 Rubbery cheese
12 About, in legalese
13 Iced drinks
18 Lemon rinds
22 Shannon and Monte
24 Not just any
26 Back muscle, in gym-speak
27 Stable newborn
28 Number



- two in population
29 Certain radar detector
30 "____ my God, thou art very great" (Psalm 104:1)
31 A judge, for one
35 Whirlpool
37 Discretion to choose
40 Londoner, for short
41 Home of the Braves, briefly
42 Soothing pill
43 Losing
gambler's marker
44 Football helmet feature
46 At leisure
49 Shriners' hats (Var.)
50 LeBron's target
51 "Toy Story" boy
53 Basso Pinza
55 Tear apart
56 Spirit
57 Utah ski spot
59 Roman 700
60 Main, Hollywood and Vine (Abbr.)

Yesterday's Solution



Horoscope

By Stella Wilder

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) You'll be attracted to everything new, different, unusual, bizarre and even risky or dangerous. Use caution especially after dark.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) Don't refuse a friend who asks you for a special favor. Chances are you'll be repaid two- or three-fold before you know it.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) You're looking for perfection, when you should be looking for mere improvements. Progress is made only one step at a time.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20) Don't fritter your energies away on those endeavors that will amount to little or nothing in the long run. Focus on scoring a major victory.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) You may have to explain yourself to the authorities, so make it short and to the point. It's essential you conceal any hostility you may feel.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) You're in no mood for preparation or for easing into anything. You'll want to jump right into whatever endeavor captures your interest.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) You needn't run at top speed all day long; take the time to chart the best possible course before setting out. You may want to use a lower-power setting.

CANCER (June 21-July 22) You may receive a few mysterious, cryptic mes-

sages throughout the day. Individually, they mean little; put together, they spell out something important.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) Try not to pin yourself, or anyone else, down. Give yourself enough room to maneuver. You may have to weigh several options this evening.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) Creativity may outweigh your willingness to work as hard as necessary. Trust others to implement your plans.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) You may have to face one or two happy and not-so-happy consequences of a recent impulsive act. You'll learn how much you can affect others.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) Maintain the outward show of rational calm, though inside your emotions may be bubbling very near the surface. Image is everything.

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